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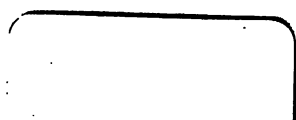
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1. 6. 44.



1. 6. 44.





the Vindication of it makes up the rest of the book; and in the following remarks is, for brevity's sake, quoted in the words of the running title, The grounds of catholic doctrine. 'Tis the answering of this Vindication, which has swell'd the following essay so much beyond its intended bigness. Which however could not well be avoided, without giving occasion of triumph, as if the Romish creed had been attacked by one, who was able to say nothing against the arguments alleged in its defence.

LONDON,
Mar. 25. 1737.



A View

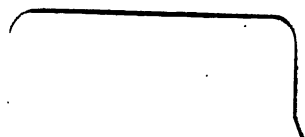


A View of P O P E R Y :

taken from the Creed of
Pope P I U S the IVth.

A Very small treatise, intituled, *The Creed of pope Pius the IV: or a Prospect of Popery, taken from that authentic Record*, was printed in the year 1687, on occasion of the visible growth of popery at that time, and the danger of its increasing farther. It is upon the apprehension that zealous endeavours are now employed by *Romish* emissaries, in many parts of this nation, to gain proselytes to popery, that this essay is sent abroad; attended

1. 6. 44.





they assert their liberty as becomes protestants. The greatest part however of the things contained in this creed, as was before observed, they all believe and acknowledge.

But this, it seems, was not enough for a creed of the church of *Rome*. There must be some form of faith, whereby, as by an authentic act, papists must for ever be distinguished from protestants. Twelve new articles therefore are added; which are all truly *Romish*, and built solely upon human authority. These I shall set down in order, and make some remarks on them.

But it is needful first to warn the reader of the ensnaring manner, in which the articles of pope *Pius's* creed are connected with those of the *Nicene*. The *Nicene* creed makes mention of *one, holy, catholic and apostolic church*: and the creed of pope *Pius* begins with a profession of admitting and embracing the traditions, &c. of *the same church*; insinuating, that all the traditions of the church of *Rome* are traditions of *the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church*. And it is certain the *Romanists* do pretend, that all these characters belong to their church, and to that alone. They make themselves the *whole* church of Christ; and exclude all others from being so much as a part of it. They confine *holiness* to themselves; and confidently affirm, that their church alone is derived from the *apostles*.

These things are not indeed expressly asserted in pope *Pius's* first article. It was more plausible to speak of *the church* in a general way at the beginning; because every one would more readily ascribe the characters of *one, holy, catholic* and

and *apostolic*, to the church of Christ in an unconfined sense, than to the church of *Rome*, or any other church in particular. But since this same creed, in its eleventh article, speaks expressly of the *holy, catholic, apostolic Roman church*, as *the mother and mistress of all churches*, and thereby clearly confines these characters to that church: it is proper here at the beginning to give notice of the snare; and to avoid the dangerous fallacy of considering any of the articles of this creed as doctrines of *the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church*.

That article of the *Nicene* creed, [*I believe one, holy, catholic and apostolic church*] is capable of a very harmless sense, against which no christian whatever will object. Which is this: that our Lord Jesus Christ has a church, scattered up and down in various parts of the world; the members whereof are *holy* in the disposition of their minds, and entertain the substance of *the doctrine of the apostles*. This is the true general or universal, that is, the true *catholic* church. And this is undoubtedly *one*, in that large sense, wherein all those are included as its members, who heartily believe in Jesus Christ, acknowledging him for their Saviour, and obeying him as their Ruler. To all these he becomes *the author of eternal salvation*; as he himself assures us, *John* III. 36. and his apostle after him, *Heb.* V. 9. *Rom.* X. 8, 9. And all such are likewise declared to be *the children of God*, *Gal.* III. 26. *born of God*, 1 *John* V. 1. Now they who are become *the children of God, thro' faith in Christ Jesus*, and heirs of his promised *salvation*, do
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certainly in the large and general sense belong to *his church*, tho' their faith should be attended with some mistakes. And in this large sense alone, if at all, it is, that the members of the church of *Rome* can be acknowledged members of *the one church of Christ*; so very widely has that church departed from the faith which Christ and his apostles delivered.

If it be said, that the *Nicene* fathers did not speak of *the church* in this large and general sense; but meant a visible church, which was called *catholic* or universal, by reason of the greater number of those who were esteemed true professors of *the holy doctrine of the apostles*, in opposition to the smaller number of those who differed from them; and that they called themselves *one church*, in opposition to the different parties of those who differed from them: yet this will never prove, that the superior number, who pleased themselves with these titles, did in all points adhere to *the doctrine of the apostles*, and that none who differed from them were in the right. There can be no reasonable doubt, that many of those, who call'd themselves *the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church*, were far enough from agreeing with each other in several particulars; and in that case some of them must differ from *the doctrine of the apostles*, and therefore not be *apostolical*. Nor is there any doubt, that many of them were far enough from being *holy* in their hearts and in their practice. It is not therefore men's giving themselves the name and title of *one, holy, catholic and apostolic church*, that will prove them to be so. So far as they differ from each other, they
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are not *one*, in the *Romish* sense of Unity ; nor can they, for the same reason, be justly called universal or *catholic*. And if they are unholy in their lives ; the name of *holy*, with regard to the church wherewith they communicate, signifies nothing. Nor are they *apostolic*, in any respect wherein they differ from the *apostles doctrine*. And yet there may be several churches, each of them, for the substance of their doctrines, *apostolical*, tho' differing in some points from each other ; and each of them maintaining *holiness*, in the life and practice of their communicants, as well as in the tendency of their doctrines. And all these will with much better reason go to the making up *one* invisible *catholic* or universal church, than any single visible church whatever can be called *catholic*, to the exclusion of all others.

Nor does it appear from the history of the *Nicene* council, that the bishops, and other divines of whom it consisted, look'd upon any one particular church, (and such was the church of *Rome* among the rest) as *the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church*. No : they were all of them call'd together by the authority and command of the emperor *Constantine*, to consult about such matters as he thought fit to lay before them : and the professed agreement of such a number of divines, call'd together from so many distant nations, made them look upon their determinations as the determinations of *the catholic church*.

But whatever they call'd themselves ; and how much soever we agree with them in the substance of their doctrine : yet their determinations are not the foundation of our faith : nor had they,

nor cou'd any council of uninspir'd men in the world have, authority to determine what we shall believe or practise. So far as they agree with the *doctrine of the apostles*, it is fit we should agree with them. But then this is not because of any authority in the council of *Nice*; but because *the doctrine of the apostles* is true, and fit to be believed.

And if the *Nicene* council itself had no authority over the consciences of christians; what authority could it convey to the church of *Rome*? What authority did it ever pretend to convey to the *Roman* church, more than to the church of *Antioch* or *Alexandria*, or any other? Indeed if it had made ever such high pretences; what authority could it give to any church in the world, to frame new articles of religion at her own pleasure, and to damn such as should refuse to receive them? But reserving the consideration of *authority* to the eleventh article of pope *Pius's* creed; I now proceed to shew, that the church of *Rome* is not the *one, holy, catholic and apostolic church*, which she pretends to be.

She is not *one*, in that very sense wherein she reproaches protestants for not being *one*. If protestants are in many points divided into parties; so are the papists. Witness the divisions between the *Franciscans* and *Dominicans* about the immaculate conception; those between the *Jesuits* and *Jansenists* about predestination; and the present struggles, now of a pretty long standing, about the bull *Unigenitus*; besides the many horrible schisms which have arisen by setting up one pope against another, and the contentions about the seat of infallibility. If they say, that they are *one*, in
all

all things necessary to salvation: the protestants with much more truth and reason affirm this concerning themselves; and that the things wherein they differ from each other do not hinder their being of the *one* church of Jesus Christ.

But if the church of *Rome* did agree with itself in all points of doctrine and practice; that is, if they were at *unity* among themselves, which it is plain they are not, nor ever were: yet their unity could not be said to be with Christ Jesus, the sole *head of the church*, but with the pope considered as head; which very thing is inconsistent with and subversive of the true *unity* of the christian church.

Whoever they are, that deny Jesus Christ to be *the head of the church*, they cut themselves off from *union* with him; and consequently must be far enough from being *his one church*. Now Christ is not the *head* of his church, if he is not *sole head*. How then comes the pope to pretend to make laws as he pleases? And how can they be *the one church of Christ*, who are so far from owning him their *sole head*, as to remove their allegiance from him to a fellow mortal, and to obey that mortal even in opposition to Christ? Yet this must be the case in all those instances, where the pope's decrees are obeyed, though contrary to the mind of Christ. To what purpose therefore can it be for papists to prove the *unity* of Christ's church from such texts as that of *Eph. IV. 5.* where the apostle assures us, that there is but *one Lord, and one faith*; when it is plain that they set up *another Lord* besides Christ, and *another faith*, contrary to that which
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he taught? Let it be ever so clear, that the church of Christ is *one*, without distinction of *Jew* and *Gentile*; as Christ himself, *John* X. 16. signified it should be: yet the church of *Rome* cannot be this *one church*, while she renounces allegiance to Christ *the head*, and obeys another head, in many things which are quite contrary to Christ's doctrine.

Again: their *schismatical separation* from the rest of *the body* is in itself a sufficient proof, that the church of *Rome* cannot be *the one church* of Christ. *There is*, says the apostle, *one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling*: *Eph.* IV. 4. But the church of *Rome* opposes and renounces this *one spirit*, which should *unite* us; rends herself from this *one body*; or, which comes to much the same thing, tears off from communion with her all those who will not submit to her arbitrary determinations, denying that any such can have *the one hope of the christian calling*. She imposes her abominable corruptions upon those, whose consciences cannot comply with them; and imposes them with the utmost bitterness and cruelty. She thereby drives all other christians from her communion: and consequently creates a schism, and destroys that *unity* to which she pretends. If therefore this corrupt and persecuting church is a part of the church of Christ, it can be no better than a *schismatical part*: for they are always the schismatics, who are the causes, the necessary causes, of the schism. However, nothing is more plain, than that they cannot be *the one church of Christ*.

Consequently, they cannot be *the catholic church*. There is no need to compare numbers,
for

for deciding this point: no need of enquiring whether the numbers in the church of *Rome* are superior or inferior to the *Greek* church and all the protestant churches put together. Their cutting themselves off from union with Christ *the head*, and from all other parts of his body, plainly shews them not to be *the catholic church*. All they who *hold the head* may be united to each other, notwithstanding the inferiority of some members, and the superiority of others; and even notwithstanding some weaknesses and defects in some of the members, which the rest are to bear with, and to contribute as much as they can to their restoration and perfection. But when, besides rejecting allegiance to the head, the church of *Rome* does what she can to destroy all other members besides herself, damning and persecuting with the utmost cruelty all those who cannot comply with her unrighteous claims; what pretence has she to *catholicism*? Next to *holding Christ the head*, the unity of the christian church consists in the mutual love of the members to each other. This is that *bond of perfectness*, which unites the whole *catholic church* together; and not an exact unity of opinion in all points. How then can they be the *catholic church*, who will damn their brethren to the pit of hell, and without mercy persecute them to death in this world, for want of agreeing with them in every doubtful opinion, and joining with them in their abominable corruptions?

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There is, I say, no need to compare numbers for deciding which is *the catholic church*. And therefore it is to no manner of purpose; that * the author of *The Grounds of catholic doctrine* † produces such a number of texts, and particularly prophetical texts, to shew
 ‘ that the church of Christ shall be *universal*,
 ‘ by being the church of all ages and of all
 ‘ nations;’ and affirms, that ‘ in them it is
 ‘ always represented as a numerous congregation spread through the world.’ For in none of these texts, nor in any other, is it promised, that the church of Christ shall always be a numerous congregation, spread through the world: nor is it any where promised, that it shall in all ages be the church of all nations. Indeed those texts have been in some good measure fulfill’d already, in the large spread which the gospel of Christ has received. And from those and other prophetical texts we have good reason to believe, that in God’s good time Christ’s church will become universal. But then this must be brought about by the overthrow of the antichristian church of *Rome*: whose abominable corruptions are the grand hindrance of the larger spread of the gospel; and have sometimes been suffered to prevail almost to the extinguishing the light of it.

By those *corruptions* they have effectually proved themselves not to be that *holy church*,
 which

* See the preface to this essay.

† Pag. 12, 13.

th they pretend to be. And surely we may
 are to set down in the number of corruptions
 worship of saints and angels, and of images,
 rary to express warnings of the word of God;
 worship of the bread in the sacrament, on
 ence of its being † turned into *the body and*
l, and soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ;
 making the Mass a propitiatory sacrifice for
 living and the dead; the doctrines of indul-
 ges, of purgatory, of authoritative absolu-
 s by mortal men, and even by men under the
 power * of mortal sin themselves; the de-
 sence of the efficacy of the sacraments upon
 priest's good intention; the taking away
 scriptures from the common people, and re-
 ing the use of an unknown tongue in their
 vers: but above all others, the doctrine of
 llibility, which takes away the very founda-
 of christian faith; by taking away the autho-
 of the word of God, and leaves no founda-
 for the faith of the christian church, but the
 ority of fallible men; and the doctrine of
 pope's supremacy, which is an impious inva-
 of Christ's prerogative, who is sole law-
 r and head of the church.

~~These~~ *are corruptions* inconsistent with a *holy*
especially with the one, holy, catholic, and
church. And these are instances, in
 is certain that the church of *Rome* has act-
 en into pernicious errors. So that it will
 help that church to say in general con-

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cerning

the Vth. article of pope *Pius's* Creed.

The council of *Trent* says, Sess. XIV. can. 10. de pœniten-
any one shall say, that priests who are in mortal sin have not the
of binding and loosing; or that any other besides priests are the
ers of absolution; let him be accursed.

cerning *the church of Christ*, as the author of the * *Grounds of catholic doctrine* does, that ‘ she is always *holy* in her doctrine and terms of communion, and always *free from pernicious errors*.’ For whatever is true concerning *the church of Christ*, this is not true concerning the church of *Rome*. The doctrines just now mentioned are her doctrines, and are by her made *terms of communion*: and they are *pernicious errors*, wherein she has shamefully apostatiz’d from the *holy doctrine* of Christ. It is vain therefore to apply to that church those texts of scripture which belong to the invisible church. Vain is it in particular to † apply to that church what our Lord said to *Peter*, *Matt. XVI. 18.* that *he would build his church upon a rock, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it.* For *the rock*, upon which our Lord there declared he would build his church, was manifestly *Peter’s* confession, mentioned ver. 16. *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* But by the abominable corruptions just mentioned it appears, that the church of *Rome* is not built upon this rock, but upon something else, very different from it. It is vain for them to ‡ alledge in this case, from *John XIV. 6.* that *Christ is the way, and the truth, and the life*: because it is evident by these instances, that they have apostatiz’d from *the true way*, and do not walk in it. It is vain to apply to themselves the promise which Christ made to his apostles, || *Matt. XXVIII. 19, 20.* when he gave them commission to teach and baptize in his name; that *he would be with them always, even unto the end*

* Pag. 10.

† *ibid.*‡ *ibid.*|| *ibid.*

end of the world. For this promise was given in close connexion with a charge, *to teach men to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded*; and not to teach things inconsistent with Christ's commands, and with his legislative authority; which the doctrines abovementioned most evidently are. It is as vain to apply to the church of *Rome*, or to the whole body of her pastors and teachers, the promise which Christ made to his * apostles, *John XIV. 17. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth*; and his assurances, ver. 26, that *this Spirit of truth should teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said to them*; and that other promise, ch. XVI. 13. that *he should guide them into all truth*. For it is evident, that some of these promises were made personally to the apostles, relating to the extraordinary service in which they were to be employ'd; and not to the whole body of the pastors and teachers of the church. And whatever there is in these promises, which is not restrained to the apostles in person, belongs to all Christ's faithful disciples, all those who act agreeably to *the Spirit of Christ*: so that they have no relation to the pastors and teachers of the church of *Rome*.

Lastly, it is a great perversion of scripture to produce in this controversy the words of *St. Paul, 1 Tim. III. 15.* to prove † that 'the church cannot uphold pernicious errors;' and to argue from this and the other texts before recited, as

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* *Grounds of cath. doct.* pag. 11.

† *ibid.* pag. 12.

the author of *the* * *Grounds of cath. doct.* does, that 'the church of Christ is infallible in all matters relating to faith, so that she can neither add nor retrench from what Christ taught.' The other texts have been already consider'd, and shewn to have no relation to the church of *Rome*, otherwise than as in general they condemn her errors and corruptions. As for these words of *St. Paul*; all that they affirm concerning *the church* is, that it is *the house of God*: and *Timothy*, being a person of considerable character and eminency in the church, is put in mind to behave himself as became *a pillar* in that *house*. The author indeed abovementioned takes advantage of a mistake of our translators; who have rendered the apostle's words differently from what appears to have been his meaning. The apostle does not speak of *the church* as *a pillar*, much less as *the pillar and ground of truth*: but signifies to *Timothy*, that he had written that epistle to him, to put him in mind, how it became a person who was *a pillar and ground of truth*, (meaning *Timothy* himself) *to behave in the house of God, which is the church of the living God*. This is the natural order and plain sense of the words: ἵνα εἰδῆς πῶς δεῖ ἐν οἴκῳ Θεοῦ ἀναστρέφεσθαι, (ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐκκλησία Θεοῦ ζώντος) στήλη καὶ ἐδραῖωμα καὶ ἀληθεία. And this is agreeable to other passages in the new testament: where persons of high character and importance in the church, for supporting and adorning the truths it maintains, as for example, *James*, *Cephas* and *John*, are called *pillars*; *Gal. II. 9.* and agreeable like-
wise

* *Grounds*, pag. 12.

wise to the promise of Christ, *Rev. III. 12. Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.* These words therefore are altogether foreign to the purpose for which they are produced: and are by misinterpretation made to ascribe that infallibility to the church, concerning which the apostle never once entertained a thought; and which however, it appears from the abovementioned specimen of gross errors, cannot belong to the church of *Rome*.

Indeed it does not appear, that our blessed Lord ever promised to secure unerring perfection to any visible church or its teachers: tho' we have abundant reason to be satisfied from many passages of scripture, that Christ will always have a church somewhere or other; that is, a number of faithful persons, maintaining his true doctrine: that tho' they may sometimes be reduc'd to great extremities and small numbers, and tho' their enemies may endeavour and hope to extirpate them quite; yet they shall not be able to prevail. And this was made good in the almost miraculous preservation of the substance of the protestant doctrine among the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, under the cruel persecutions of the church of *Rome*; which had banished the light of the christian doctrine from all places where her influence reached, and did what she could to extinguish it intirely.

The texts therefore cited in *the Grounds of cath. doct.* to † prove 'that Christ has always a true church upon earth,' no otherwise relate to the church of *Rome*, than as they shew, that the faithfulness of God's promise is engaged to pre-

serve and maintain somewhere or other that *true doctrine*, which they have corrupted and endeavoured to destroy. And as to the texts ‡ quoted to prove, ‘ that the church of Christ is always visible:’ we protestants thankfully acknowledge they have been so far fulfilled, that the light of the christian doctrine has never yet been totally extinguished; and are encouraged by them to hope and believe it never will. Nay we are by these very texts fully satisfied, that a time will come, when the corruptions of the church of *Rome* shall be detected, and shall make way for that *pure doctrine* of Christ himself, which shall prevail and triumph over them, and shine through the world with its own light. In the mean time ’tis evident, that the greatest part of these texts have not yet had their full accomplishment: and that tho’ some of them have been in part fulfilled, in relation to the church of Christ; yet they are no way inconsistent with those other scriptures, which signify, that the same church should sometimes be reduced to great distress and obscurity, as history proves it has been.

Enough has been said to shew, that the church of *Rome* is not a *holy church*. And if she is unholy, she is consequently not *apostolical*; that is, not conform’d to *the doctrine of the apostles*, which is a *holy doctrine*. But they tell you they are *apostolical* by a continued, uninterrupted succession of their bishops from the apostles. To which I answer: that if this were true, it could never make that an *apostolical church*, which departs from *the apostolical doctrine*. Besides: it is impossible

sible for any bishop in the world to prove his succession in an uninterrupted line from the apostles; because it is evident from history, that many breaches have been made in that line; and because no certain account has been kept of all the ordinations derived from the several broken links, nor any way ever found to unite them again in one continued length.

In deducing the line of succession one would think some regard should have been had to *Paul*, or *James*, or *Andrew*, or some other of the apostles besides *Peter*: and an account shou'd be produced of the several bishops they ordain'd, and the series of those others, whom these bishops and their successors ordain'd. But we will leave others to determine about these things. And if, for once, we should take for granted, that all the successions in these western parts are to be derived from St. *Peter*; which yet is taking for granted abundance of things that want to be proved: still we could not derive even these successions with any thing like a certainty; because historians do not agree about *Peter's* successors, either in the order or number of them, in the most early days. And then, in the corrupt times, when the *Roman* bishop began to exalt himself above his brethren; ~~the sweet morsel of~~ the sweet morsel of usurped power was so much coveted, that ambitious churchmen set up one against another; in so much that often there have been two, three, nay four popes at a time, cursing each other and all their adherents. Now all these, in opposition to each other, could never convey regular successions:

cessions: and no man living is able to prove, from which of these he derives his own ordination; the oppositions have been so numerous, and some of so long standing. I shall take the liberty to mention a few, taken from writers of the *Romish* communion.

Onuphrius Parrvinus, who wrote a continuation of *Platina's* lives of the popes, gives, in his index at the end of the work, the following account of what he calls the first schism in the *Roman* church. * *Novatian, a Roman, and presbyter of the holy Roman church, was ordained chief pontif by some schismatical presbyters, notwithstanding Cornelius had been created pope by a regular ordination. He sat some years: and being at length driven from the church, became author of the heresy which goes by his name.* This was as early as the year 252, according to *Onuphrius*. And, which is very remarkable, he says not only that *Novatian* was a heretic, and author of a heresy; but that he was ordained pope by presbyters, schismatical presbyters; and that he sat some years. We are not certain therefore, but some of the *Romish* bishops and priests now living may have

* Novatianus, Romanus, sanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ presbyter, in schismate contra Cornelium papam, auctore Novato, presbytero ecclesiæ Carthaginensis; sedit annos aliquot. — Schisma primum in Romana ecclesiâ: in quo, Cornelio papa, legitima ordinatione creato, Novatianus, sanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ presbyter, ab aliquibus schismaticis presbyteris pontifex maximus ordinatus est. Qui, ecclesiâ pulsus, hæresim Novatianorum condidit. *Platin. vit. Pontif. in fol. Colon. 1562. pag. 347.*

This is *Onuphrius's* account, in an early edition of *Platina*. 'Tis pity he did not produce his authorities. But it was afterwards thought that he had spoken too plain: for in following editions, particularly that in quarto, 1626, care was taken to leave out so great a scandal to the church, as this story of an ordination by presbyters.

have received their ordination from those, whose predecessors were ordained by this *presbyterian* pope: and then their *episcopal succession*, though ever so clear for some ages past, can according to their own principles do them no good; their ministrations are of no validity; and their people, however confidently they may believe themselves to be christians, are no better than heathens.

But to come to later times: the thirteenth schism, the same author tells us, was in the year 891, between *Formosus* and *Sergius*. And concerning *Formosus*, *Platina* says: *that in the time of pope John IXth he left his bishopric, to avoid that pope's severity; that he fled into France, and swore he would never return to his bishopric or to Rome, from whence he had been banished for a conspiracy; that he was anathematized and deprived of all ecclesiastical dignity; and took to himself profane garments, as well as a profane course of life: but that pope Martin absolved him of his oath, and restored him; and that afterwards he got the popedom, more by bribery than virtue.* The fifteenth schism, *Onuphrius* tells us, was in the year 964, between *John XII*, *Leo VIII*, and *Benedict V*. The first of whom, *Platina* tells us, was a person from his very youth stain'd with all manner of filthiness, and spent all the time he could spare from his lusts in hunting rather than in prayer: that he was summoned before a council to answer for his wickedness, and to lay down the popedom: and that at length he was taken in adultery, and kill'd. The sixteenth schism was in 974, between four popes at a time. So likewise the eighteenth, in 1045, between four popes: two of whom

whom *Platina* describes as *hideous monsters*. The twentieth between *Gregory VII.* and *Clement III.*, and their successors, for 40 years together, beginning in 1080. And, to mention no more: the twenty-sixth schism, which *Onuphrius* calls *a long one, and worse than all the rest*, began in the year 1378, between pope *Urban VI.* and *Clement VII.*: and did not end till 40 years after, upon the election of *Martin V.*

From these facts it is plain, that there have been numerous breaches in the line of succession. But in case there never had been any: yet how absurd would it be to imagine, that Christ could have no true church without an uninterrupted succession of bishops, to ordain its ministers? Cou'd then the good effect of all Christ's institutions depend upon their swimming through such a corrupt stream as this has proved? Cou'd there be no valid administration of baptism or the Lord's supper, nor any salutary effect of preaching the gospel, but by those, who derived their ordination from *fornicators, adulterers, magicians, murderers, and monsters* in all kinds of *wickedness*? Yet such have many of the popes been. And, which more evidently and more nearly affects the doctrine of the succession; such have been great numbers of the bishops, by whom the succession has been immediately handed down from one generation to another; not excepting those of our own nation. The abominable wickedness of their lives, particularly their lewdness, their insatiable covetousness, and the rapacious and cruel methods practised for maintaining their greatness and their luxury, prov'd one means of hastening

hastening the reformation; as the corruptness of their doctrine proved another. For people of any sober thought cou'd no more believe, that men who were thus notoriously wicked cou'd be *the ministers of Christ*, than that the corrupt doctrine of the church of *Rome* cou'd be *the doctrine of Christ*. And indeed, how can any man believe, that ordination by such hands is essential to the constitution of Christ's church; or that the want of it should leave men to the uncovenanted mercies of God? Thanks to the wise and gracious founder of our religion, he hath not left us in so deplorable a case: he hath not made his church to depend upon the succession of any order of men whatever; but upon the maintaining of that holy doctrine, on which, as upon a rock, he himself built it. By virtue of this constitution we had a right, and even a duty incumbent on us, to separate from so corrupt a church as that of *Rome*, even in case all the clergy had resolved to remain in that church, and not one had come over with the reformers, to ordain the rest.

It is therefore exceedingly vain and trifling, in the author of *the * Grounds of cath. doct.* to affirm, ' that those only who can derive their lineage from the apostles, are the heirs of the apostles; ' and that consequently they alone can claim a ' right to the scriptures, to the administration ' of the sacraments, or any share in the pastoral ' ministry; that 'tis their proper inheritance, ' which they have received from the apostles, and ' the apostles from Christ.' It is vain and trifling to talk in this manner. But, which is much

worse for him; it is dangerous, and even pernicious to his cause. For hereby he directly acknowledges; that 'if he himself cannot derive his own lineage from the apostles, he is no heir of the apostles, and consequently can claim no right to the scriptures, to the administration of the sacraments, or any share in the pastoral ministry.' Let him therefore prove his lineage from the apostles; and give us the line of succession, from the apostles days to his own. He is obliged to do it, by affirming in the face of the world, that *none are heirs of the apostles; but those who can derive their lineage from them.* And he will do great service to his church, if he will oblige the world with that clear account of an uninterrupted succession, which has never yet seen the light. But 'tis vain to expect it.

And 'tis as vain to quote * scripture in such a cause. For whatever commission Christ gave to his apostles, to preach his gospel and to administer his ordinances; and whatever assurance he gave, that *he would be with them* and their successors *to the end of the world*: they only are herein the true successors of the apostles, who minister the same ordinances, and preach the same doctrine which Christ gave to the apostles in commission; and not they who substitute another doctrine and other ordinances in their room. Whatever assurance Christ gave to his apostles, that the Holy Ghost, *the Spirit of truth should abide with them for ever*; yet he never promised that his Spirit should abide with those, who resist and oppose him. And as to that passage, *John XX. 21*:
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the circumstances of Christ's *breathing upon the apostles*, and the extraordinary effects which followed their preaching, shewed that the commission then given them had something special in it, relating personally to themselves. And tho' there is no doubt, that Christ would have his gospel preached to the end of the world; yet this argues nothing in favour of the church of *Rome*: whose doctrine is quite different from and even contrary to that of Jesus Christ; so that no line of succession, tho' ever so clear and uninterrupted, can convey authority from Christ or his apostles, to preach such a doctrine as theirs is. They are not therefore *the heirs of the apostles*: for they have rejected *the apostolical scriptures* from being *their inheritance*, and chosen their own traditions.

'Tis therefore vile sophistry, under the name of *the catholic church* to insinuate, * that ' the church of *Rome*, and that alone, had always ' a visible being in the world ever since Christ's ' time.' For besides that there was no church at all in *Rome* for some time after Christ's ascension: there was neither at *Rome*, nor in any other part of the world, for many ages after Christ, any such church as the present church of *Rome*, either in respect of doctrine, or discipline, or worship.

And whereas 'tis affirm'd, † that ' the protestant church came into the world since the ' year 1500; and that they who came 1500 ' years after Christ came 1500 years too late to ' be the religion or church of Christ: 'tis sufficient

* Grounds of cath. doct. pag. 14.

† *ibid.*

cient to answer: that the protestant doctrine is the very doctrine of the new testament; and consequently did not come into the world since 1500, but is as old as the books of the new testament: that the corrupt doctrines of the church of *Rome* are innovations crept in by degrees: that what the protestants did since 1500 was the declaring and protesting against those innovations, and laying hold on the opportunity, which the good providence of God presented, for rescuing themselves from the tyranny of a church, which had held them and their fathers in bondage: and that whereas many good christians had for a long time before complain'd of the corruptions of the *Romish* church, and some had suffered martyrdom for opposing them; the not being in a condition to protect themselves in the possession of a pure doctrine 'till about the year 1500, proves no more, than that God, in the wisdom of his providence, suffered a corrupt church to oppress them till that time. But the proof of what is really *the religion or church of Christ* must be taken from those holy scriptures, which contain that religion, and describe that church. And protestants chearfully submit the whole cause to that decision.

My only reason for this introduction to pope *Pius's* articles is, as I before observed, their connexion with that article of the *Nicene* Creed, which might make an unwary reader reverence them as articles of *the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church*, to which they have really no relation. I now come to the articles themselves.

The first of them is expressed in the following words.

I. *I do*

I. *I do most firmly admit and embrace apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and the rest of the observances and constitutions of the same church.*

By [*the same church*] is meant *the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church*, mentioned just before, in the *Nicene creed*: which characters, as we have seen, the church of *Rome* falsely ascribes and confines to herself. *Ecclesiastical traditions, and the rest of the observances and constitutions of this church*, are here put upon the same foot with *apostolical traditions*; and, according to the tenor of this article, are to be received and entertained with the same *firmness*. And indeed the church of *Rome* might as well have called all her own traditions and constitutions *apostolical*, as some of those which she does call so. Now the *embracing* of all these, without exception, is, according to the conclusion of this creed, made *necessary to the salvation* of every private christian: for it is there declared concerning the whole creed, that *without this faith no man can be saved*.

But how monstrous is the absurdity, as well as the wickedness, of such an imposition! How is it possible, that every individual of the common people should *most firmly admit and embrace* all those things, which this creed calls *apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and the rest of the observances and constitutions*

tutions of the church: when, in order to do this, they must every one of them be acquainted with all ecclesiastical history, and with all the oral as well as written traditions; and must, in order to the *firm admission* of them, have examin'd and approv'd them? And even in case every private christian had the opportunity of being acquainted with all the *traditions and observances and constitutions of the church*: yet how can he with a good conscience *firmly admit and embrace them*, without a full satisfaction, that all of them are the very mind of God? And how shall their being delivered and decreed by a number of fallible men be able to satisfy any man's conscience, that all these things are really the mind of God, and that the embracing them is *necessary to salvation*? A terrible stumbling-block this, at the very entrance! But over it you must get: otherwise the whole creed signifies nothing. Implicit faith is the first distinguishing character of a true *Romanist*. If you offer to examine, even into those constitutions which are of the most shocking nature, of which there is plenty in the church of *Rome*; you are by that very means brought into the dangerous suspicion of heresy. The traditions of the church must be *received with the same reverence and pious affection, as the holy scriptures themselves*. So the council of *Trent* expressly declares *they receive them*: * *Seff. IV. decr. de can. Scr.* And so must the people too: or else they are by the same council, and almost in the same breath, declared *accursed*.

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* *Pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia.*

But Christ has taught us quite another doctrine. He taught his disciples not to depend upon *the tradition of the elders*; but to follow *the command of God* in opposition to it. He charged the *Scribes and Pharisees* with *making the commandment of God of no effect by their tradition*: and signified, that *in vain they worshiped God, while they taught for doctrines the commandments of men*: Matt. XV. 6, 9. By their *traditions*, pretended to be delivered by *Moses*, but not committed to writing, they eluded, and even opposed, the plain written commands of God. And in like manner does the church of *Rome*, by its pretended *apostolical traditions*, of which the apostles themselves knew nothing at all, and by their own authoritative new *constitutions*, make void the plain doctrines of Christ in the new testament.

They pretend, that some considerable and important parts of the mind of Christ, with regard to our faith and practice, were left out of all the writings of the new testament, to be conveyed by tradition; and that their church is in possession of all those traditions: and accordingly they produce what traditions they please, just as the exigences of their church require; and insist upon our receiving and complying with them. But this we cannot do, without casting contempt upon that written word, which is in itself a perfect rule, and sufficient for our guidance; and throwing ourselves into the utmost danger of losing and acting contrary to that perfect rule which we have already, under the pretence of supplying its defects.

The scheme of the gospel, as it stands in the new testament, so fully answers all the ends that can be desired, for restoring lapsed mankind; proposes measures for that purpose so perfectly suited to their necessities and to the divine perfections; contains so copious an account of what is required of a christian; and is attended with such well-grounded assurances of happiness to those who duly regard it, as well as clear proofs of its coming from God: that we have abundant reason to believe, that the whole of *the faith once delivered to the saints* is contained in the books of the new testament; and that no one thing essential to a christian's character, or necessary to his happiness, is wanting therein. On the same accounts therefore we have reason to believe, that Christ chose in this manner to convey to succeeding generations the certain knowledge of that doctrine of his, which he would have to be the rule of their faith and practice. Nor indeed is it consistent with that tender concern, which the books of the new testament shew Christ had for our welfare, or with the wisdom which shines thro' the whole scheme of doctrine those books contain; that he should choose to leave any thing of moment to be conveyed by such an uncertain precarious way as oral tradition.

It is evident, from the books of the new testament, that the gospel of Christ was calculated for all succeeding generations, as well as for that one in which he himself lived; and that it was his mind it should be conveyed to future ages. We have reason therefore to believe, he
would

would take care, that the authentic doctrine, which his immediate followers received from him, should in all its essential parts be conveyed with certainty. Accordingly we find, that two of the apostles, *Matthew* and *John*, employed themselves in writing an account of the life and doctrine and death and resurrection of Christ their master; not contenting themselves merely with preaching in his name. The same was done by *Mark* and *Luke*, who were not apostles. And *Luke* in particular assures us, that the view he had in writing was, *that the certainty of those things wherein christians had been instructed might thereby be made known; that christians might know the certainty of those things which were most surely believed in the primitive age: Luke I. 1-----4.* It was manifestly with the same view, that *John* wrote his gospel. For thus he himself declares, towards the latter end of it: ch. XX. ver. 30, 31. *Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.* The ample provision made by other new testament writers in their epistles, for explaining some doctrines of christainity, which could not fully be understood during Christ's life, sufficiently shews, that they were directed by the good Spirit of God to employ themselves in that way. And the clearness with which they have set forth those doctrines is a good proof of the fulfilment of the promise of Christ, wherein he assured his

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apostles, a little before he left them, *that the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send in his name, should teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said to them:* John XIV. 26.

Now it was of great importance, that some of these persons, thus infallibly guided, should commit to writing the substance of the christian doctrine, and the facts to which it appeals as testimonies of its divine original. For notwithstanding the wonderful efficacy of preaching the gospel in the primitive age, by persons thus assisted, and attended with miraculous powers: if God in the wisdom of his providence did not think fit to continue these miraculous powers in all generations, as it does not appear he did; and if in this state of the case there had been no written rule provided; there must have been the utmost danger of losing the true doctrine of christianity, by reason of the great uncertainties to which oral tradition is necessarily liable.

But it will be said concerning some traditions, that they are not merely oral, but taken from very ancient writings, near the time of the apostles, tho' not contain'd in the books of the new testament. Now a flagrant instance of the uncertainty even of these traditions is that of settling the time for celebrating *Easter*: and with that I shall content myself, instead of entring into a larger account. According to * *Eusebius*, this controversy was as ancient as *Polycarp's* time; who is said to have been a hearer and disciple of the apostle *John*. He, and with him
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* *Hist. eccl. lib. V. cap. 26. edit. R. Steph. 1544.*

the churches of *Asia* observed *Easter*, as the *Jews* did their passover, on the fourteenth day of the moon: while *Anicetus* bishop of *Rome*, with the *western* churches, kept it always on the first day of the week. The controversy lasted many ages; both sides claiming *apostolical tradition*; the one declaring they derived it from St. *John*, the other from St. *Peter*. And the consequence was; that in the end of the second century, *Victor* bishop of *Rome* excommunicated all the churches of *Asia*, and cut them off at one stroke. Yet the controversy was not ended, till in the fourth century the *Nicene* council, by the meer force of numbers, decided it in favour of the *western* churches. And then what became of the *apostolical tradition*, derived from St. *John*, and followed for so many generations by the churches in *Asia*?

But the *Romanists* insist, that we are indebted to *tradition* for one considerable reason why we receive those very Scriptures, which are the rule of our faith. Be it so: yet this will never help the cause of *their traditions*. For besides that the tradition, upon which we receive the books of the new testament, is vastly different from that upon which their unscriptural doctrines and practices are grounded; it is to the books themselves that we are indebted for the certainty of the things they contain, and not to the tradition which assures us that they were written by the immediate followers of Christ. The tradition, upon the credit whereof we receive the books of the new testament, is not that of a particular person or church, concerning a thing said to have been believed

lieved or practised a great while before any written account was given of it : but it is the concurring acknowledgment both of friends and enemies of christianity, in different parts of the world, and in several succeeding ages, that those books were written by the persons to whom they are ascribed ; and more especially a strong concurring evidence, from many hands in the early ages of the church, that those books were constantly read in the assemblies of christians, as the rule of their religion, and that the doctrine contained in them was known and opposed by its enemies, as the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

But tho' this tradition is sufficient to assure us, that the books of the new testament were the genuine writings of Christ's immediate followers, and acknowledged by the primitive christians as such : still the grand question is, whether notwithstanding this tradition, we are not indebted to the books themselves for the *certainty* of the things they contain ; or whether the things contained in those books could have been conveyed with *certainty*, down to our times, by the means of oral tradition.

If we can make any judgment in this case from what we see in other instances ; all certainty must have been lost long before this time ; and, for want of a written word, it would have been in the power of priests to have trump'd up whatever they pleased, for a divine tradition, as we see they do at this day, where the written word is kept from the people. We see that a single narrative or relation of a fact, tho' attended with but few circumstances, in a few weeks suffers

suffers great alterations, in being carried about only by word of mouth. How great would be the alteration at the end of two or three ages; if the matter was not by that time quite forgotten? How much greater variation then, (I am speaking of the ordinary course of things) how much greater variation, I say, must so large a narration, as that of the whole evangelical history, and such a system of doctrine, as that delivered by Christ and his apostles, have suffered, if it had not been committed to writing? And what necessity was there of a standing miracle in favour of oral tradition, when a written word would answer all the purposes we could desire?

The doctrine of the new testament is of a large compass. The preceptive doctrine itself is very copious. And there is so much of moment in the history of Christ, for satisfying us that he came from God to deliver those precepts, and to enforce them with those motives which make up another part of his doctrine; so much of moment in writing down the period of time wherein he appeared, and in naming places and persons, known to agree with the history of that time; so much of moment in the circumstances of his birth, and manner of life, the miracles he performed, the prophecies to which he appealed, the predictions he himself delivered, the death he suffered, his rising from that death, and sending down the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost upon his immediate followers: that the doctrine itself, notwithstanding all his declarations of the importance of receiving it, would in the course of a few ages have had very little regard paid to it,

it, if there had been no such circumstances to attend it. And now will any man pretend, that all these could in any tolerable measure, according to the ordinary course of things, have been preserved by *tradition*, so as to gain any degree of credit, 500 or 1000 years after the things were said to be transacted? He must have a judgment very different from that of mankind in general, who can believe it. And if the substance of Christ's doctrine, together with the historical facts which support it, would in all probability have been lost, without a written word to convey the true account of them: what credit can we rationally give to those *supposed traditions of the apostles*, which were not committed to writing? or what reason have we to believe it was ever designed by the apostles that such *traditions* should be preserved, which were not by themselves committed to writing, as the main doctrine and the historical facts were?

It is further to be noted, that the tradition above described is not the only reason why we receive the books of the new testament. For the intrinsic goodness of the moral doctrine contained in those books speaks for itself. And as to those things, which are peculiar to christianity: they are so far from being inconsistent with that reason and judgment, which teach us to submit to whatever upon good evidence appears to have the stamp of divine authority; that they approve themselves to a serious mind, as being well suited to the condition of those to whom the gospel is offered. But the traditions of the *Romish church*, besides that they are defective in
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external evidence, are many of them plainly inconsistent with and contrary to the written word, and even to common sense; so far are they destitute of any sufficient testimony, that ever they were taught by Christ or his apostles. If any of them can be proved from scripture; then they ought not to be mentioned in contradiction to it. But the greatest part of them have no presence this way: being not only unworthy of the apostles, but manifestly inconsistent with their acknowledged doctrine, contained in their writings, and with the doctrine of Christ, *their Lord and ours.*

To set these therefore, as the church of Rome does, upon an equal foot with the holy scriptures, is not only to weaken the faith of christians, but the ready way to destroy it; by drawing off their minds from a due regard to that compleat scheme of *sound doctrine*, which is a sure rule for their conduct, into an endless maze of uncertainty at the best, and a constant danger of more and more pernicious errors. And what can be the consequence of this, especially when the use of the scriptures is denied to the people; but that the people must entirely depend on the priest, and receive from his mouth whatever he is pleased to call either *scripture* or *tradition*? By these means the scripture itself is in effect only parcelled out to the people by oral tradition. It is at this rate to very little purpose that the word of Christ is conveyed to the present age in writing. It can be of no effect to those who trust in traditions, as delivered to them by their priests. For 'tis only the priest's telling

a man, that such is the tradition of the church : and then, let the thing be ever so contrary to scripture, he must comply.

This is the natural tendency of putting *traditions* upon an equal foot with *scripture*. And in the church of *Rome*, where this is practised, the event answers to it. The holy scriptures are hereby lost to the common people: lost, to all the excellent purposes for which they were designed. The people's whole religion is locked up in the breast of the priest: he thinks it more for his purpose to deal in traditions, than in the written word: and hence comes that prodigious ignorance in matters of religion, which reigns among the common people; and from which, while this continues to be their condition, there is no hope of restoring them.

I cannot leave this article without taking some notice of a text or two of scripture, upon which the * papists lay a great stress in favour of tradition. 1 *Theff.* II. 15. *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.* And ch. III. ver. 6. *We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.* To the same purpose they quote 1 *Cor.* XI. 2. 2 *Tim.* I. 13. II. 2. III. 14. But concerning these, and all others of like kind, it is sufficient to say in one word: that they manifestly relate to what these christians, and the evangelist *Timothy* in particular, had with their
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* See Grounds of cath. doct. pag. 17, 18.

own ears heard from an inspired apostle, and so were in no danger of forgetting; which case is intirely different from that of traditions, handed down by word of mouth from one generation to another, by persons not inspired. So that there is not the least resemblance between the *traditions* here spoken of, and those of the church of *Rome*.

The second article of pope *Pius's* creed is this.

II. I do admit the holy scripture in the same sense, which holy mother church hath held and doth hold; whose business it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy scriptures: nor will I ever receive or interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.

From the tenor of this article it appears, that the scripture in general is accounted so obscure, even in things of greatest importance, that the common people must by no means be allowed to take their own sense of it, but must have recourse to the interpretation of the church. But this is quite contrary to the tenor of Christ's doctrine: who exhorted, and even charged and commanded the common people, *to search the scriptures,*

tures, in which they thought they had eternal life: and gave this reason for it; because those scriptures testified of him. John V. 39. Now this exhortation, and this reason for it, he could never have given, if he had thought it out of the power of the common people, by diligent search to understand the scriptures, or to see that they did indeed testify of him. And further: if we will believe an apostle of Christ, the scripture is able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus; being given by inspiration of God, for this very purpose, that it may be profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto good works. 2 Tim III. 15, 16, 17. Now these ends it is impossible the scripture should ever answer, if it be so very obscure in those things upon which salvation depends, that a sincere enquirer, of an ordinary capacity, could not be able to understand it, or would, for want of the church's help, be in danger of perverting it to his ruin. They were not, it seems, so difficult, but that Timothy had known them from a child: even those very scriptures, which, in the next words, St. Paul tells him were able to make him wise unto salvation. And yet it does not appear, that in his childhood he had any other teachers, than his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice.

But the *Romanists* pretend to prove, from scripture itself, † that ‘ the scripture is not clear and plain in all things necessary; that is to say, in all such points wherein our salvation is so far concerned

† Grounds of cath. doct. pag. 15.

‘ concerned, that the misunderstanding and mis-
 ‘ interpreting of it may endanger our eternal
 ‘ welfare.’ They quote for that purpose St. *Peter’s* words, 2 *Pet.* III. 16. that *in St. Paul’s epistles there are some things hard to be understood, which they who are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

Now in answer hereto it is evident, that *the things hard to be understood*, whether in *St. Paul’s epistles*, or in *the other scriptures*, could not be the things necessary to salvation: for they must be plain; or else they cannot answer the end, which *St. Paul* himself declares they are *able to answer*, and for which they were manifestly given; which is, *to make us wise unto salvation*, 2 *Tim.* III. 15, 16. But when men will leave those things which are plain and of necessary use, and will lay a stress upon those which are really hard and mysterious; of which kind there are undoubtedly some things in *St. Paul’s* writings; when right or wrong they will needs make these to serve their own schemes and designs: they are then by the righteous judgment of God permitted to run into such labyrinths of error, as endanger their salvation. And these are *the unlearned and unstable men* the apostle speaks of. ’Tis plain he does not mean that kind of *learning*, which relates to languages and arts; but to *stability* in religion. Such were some in the apostles days: who had *learned* christianity to so little purpose, and were so far from being well *established* in it, that they wou’d be of any side to avoid persecution; and yet made mighty pretensions to extraordinary knowledge.

knowledge in the secrets of the Almighty. Were it not for their *instability* and corrupt bias, even the *bard* passages of scripture would not have been *perverted*, or misinterpreted to their own damage; but, with the help of time and diligence, improved to some useful purpose. It was their own corrupt disposition, that hindered their *learning*, and rendred them *unstable*. And yet even these *unlearned and unstable men* are neither by this nor any other text forbidden the use of scripture; or referr'd to tradition as a plainer and safer rule; or directed to authoritative interpreters. Nor will their abusing and perverting some difficult parts of scripture ever prove; that all scripture should be kept from the people; or that tradition is to be depended on instead of it; or that *the sense of mother church* should be fetch'd from an authoritative interpreter. The very contrary is the true inference. That is to say: if some men, through the instability and corrupt bias of their minds, pervert some parts of scripture to their own damage; we ought with sincere minds to study the whole, and improve the knowledge we gain to the best and most useful purposes.

In like manner * the *Romanists* pervert that other saying of the same apostle, 2 *Pet.* I. 20. that *no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation*. For the apostle himself, in the very next words, shews that hereby he only means, that prophecy came not from the prophet's own suggestion, but from the inspiration of God. Ver. 21. *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they*

* Grounds, pag. 16.

they were moved by the holy Ghost. It is plain therefore, that the apostle had no thought of forbidding or discouraging private persons from interpreting scripture for themselves : but rather would excite all christians to study the scriptures, and particularly the prophetical, as the subject he was treating of led him ; because the prophets spoke, not by their own impulse, but that of the Spirit of God.

But it is farther pretended, * that ‘ Christ has left his church, and her pastors and teachers, to be our guides in all controversies relating to religion, and consequently in the understanding of holy writ.’ And for this purpose the author of *the Grounds*, &c. produces a passage, which does not at all relate to the interpreting of holy writ, but only to the inspired teaching and teachers of Christ’s doctrine in the primitive times. ’Tis in *Eph. IV. 11---15*. Concerning which I shall only observe; that the *pastors* and *teachers* there spoken of, were the inspired *pastors* and *teachers* of those primitive times. For they, as well as the *apostles* and *prophets* and *evangelists*, are mention’d by the apostle as *gifts*, given by our Lord, *when he ascended into heaven*. And concerning the same inspired teachers, particularly the *apostles*, are those words of St. *John* to be understood, which are by this author most presumptuously applied to the pastors and teachers of the present times : 1 *John. IV. 6. He that knoweth God, beareth us : by this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.* Let them, who wou’d set up any *teachers* at this day with
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* *Grounds*, pag. 16.

this authority, first prove, that they are inspired with the same divine, infallible Spirit.

This the *Romanists* cannot pretend to do. And yet you see by this article, they are resolved that the church, and not the scriptures, shall be the foundation of a christian's faith. And therefore the establishing of this article is doing the very thing, which our blessed Lord charges upon the *Scribes and Pharisees*, Mat. XV. 9. *making the commandment of God of no effect by their traditions*. For let it be ever so certain, that the scriptures are the word of God, and design'd by him to be the rule of our faith and practice: yet you shall never be the better for that, because you are obliged to take them in that sense, not which you yourself see they contain, but which the church shall be pleas'd to impose upon you; that is, in short, what the priests shall think fit to decree. For after all their solemn talk of *mother church*, and of *antiquity, unity, universality*, and the like, as marks of the true church, in all which points the truth is really against them; it is notorious, that what the church of *Rome* requires you to obey is the decrees of her priests. These make themselves the very *church*. And you do by this article absolutely profess faith in the church: and declare, as the * synod of *Trent* does, *that it is her business and right to judge concerning the true sense of scripture*. The consequence whereof, as this decree is form'd in a direct opposition to private judgment, is, that your own judgment about the meaning and intent of God's word stands for nothing: in which case the word itself is *of no effect* to you.

* Sess. IV. decr. de can. script.

But

But how contradictory are these things to the common sense of mankind? If there is a revelation given from heaven for our guidance in the way thither; and if this revelation declares, that according to our reception of it, and by the rules contained in it, we shall be judged at the last day; and if we must every one be judged for himself, as it is certain we must: then it is of the highest importance, that we judge every one for himself concerning the mind of God contain'd in scripture, and not suffer the church, or any body of men in the world, to judge for us. But then the *Romish* church would be utterly ruined: and therefore it is no wonder that they lay it for a fundamental article, that private judgment is by no means to be allowed.

But let us look a little farther into the monstrous absurdity of this article, considered as bound upon the consciences of the common people. Every one of them is hereby obliged *to receive the holy scripture in the same sense which holy mother church hath held and doth hold*: and the conclusion of the creed tells you, that *without this you cannot be saved*. And did pope Pius really believe, that it was in the power of every private christian to know what sense mother church always had, and has at this day, concerning the several parts of scripture; or that belief must or can be suspended by every private christian, till he comes to be acquainted with this *same sense of holy mother church*? Has that which he calls *holy mother church* always and in all points believed and professed the same things? Has there not been a great diversity of senti-

ments in the church concerning some passages of scripture? And is not such diversity very consistent with a sound faith, and a christian life? But on which side soever the truth is; how shall a private christian, not train'd up to literature, but engaged in constant business for his necessary support; how, I say, shall such a one be able to know what have been the sentiments of the church in all past ages? How shall he search into all ecclesiastical antiquity, and judge concerning it? And indeed, if he could; to what purpose would it be, with regard to his own most important interests?

It is plain, that such a person cannot himself form the judgment, which by this article he is obliged to make. It is therefore as plain, that he is to take the priest's word for it. What the priest tells him *is and always has been the sense of the church*, he must be obliged to believe. Yet even here he will be in a miserable state of uncertainty; because the priests themselves, and the greatest doctors of their church, differ among themselves, about the interpretation of scripture. And therefore there is no way of coming at a solid satisfaction, but the true protestant way, of getting the best helps we can, and then judging for our selves.

I shall only just observe, concerning the latter part of this article, wherein the private christian promises *never to interpret scripture otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers*; that the necessary consequence is, he must never interpret the scripture at all, or take it in any sense whatever. For it is certain, from the writings

writings of the fathers, that there was no such thing as a unanimous consent among them; that in the same age some differed from others, as well as that one generation produced sentiments contrary to those of former ages: and not only so; but that the fathers differ'd from themselves, just as men in the present age are known to do. What becomes then of this *unanimous consent of the fathers*? or what business has any christian to make it an article of his faith? But so the church of *Rome* has by the mouth of pope *Pius* decreed: and herein has evidently *taught for doctrines the commandments of men*.

The third article is as follows.

III. *I do profess and believe: that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ, and necessary to the salvation of mankind, tho' not all of them necessary to every one; that is to say, baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony: and that they confer grace: and that among these, baptism and orders cannot be reiterated without sacrilege. I do likewise receive and admit the received and approved rites of the*

catholic church in the solemn administration of all the aforesaid sacraments.

This article introduces a trifling dispute about the number of *sacraments*; trifling in this respect, because it is about the meaning of a word, which is never once in the whole new testament used in that sense, to which it is here applied. But besides this, the article is full fraught with errors: and ends, like the two preceding, with a blind, implicit faith in the church; *admitting and receiving all the received rites of the church*, be they ever so inconsistent with the written commands of the great legislator.

With regard to these *rites of administration*, I cannot forbear observing, how much the church of *Rome* has darkened the plain institutions of Christ by superstitious additions of her own. Particularly, the ordinance of baptism, which in its naked simplicity clearly holds forth the designs for which it was appointed, is most miserably defaced and abused by the exorcisms, or driving out of devils, the breathings, the impositions of hands, the salt, the oil, the incense, the spittle, and a great number of other additions, to which the *Roman* ritual directs, but which have no footstep in Christ's own institution. In the eucharist they have added the idolatrous adoration of the host: not to mention the lustrations of the people, the variety of the priest's garments according to different seasons, the frequent joinings of his hands, crossings of his breast, kneelings, turnings of his whole body,

dy, lighting of candles in broad day-light, ceremonies at uncovering and covering the pyxis, separation of priests and people in communicating, serving the priests always first, and many more particulars, which might be mention'd. Innumerable almost are the ceremonies, with which the church of *Rome* has darkened and disguised these two plain institutions of Christ. No wonder therefore, that they are so ceremonious in other points. No wonder, that their own sacrament of penance, which you are to take for the whole process of Christ's doctrine of repentance, requires the servile kneeling to the priest, in confession and absolution; and the endless superstitions of obeying his commands, arbitrarily enjoined as satisfactions for sin. Nor is there any room to wonder at the tiresome, unseasonable ceremonies used in extreme unction, about a poor dying creature, who wants all the comfort his friends can give him: or at the magnificence of their sacrament of orders, in setting one frail mortal apart to minister in holy things to others, so vastly different from the simplicity of the primitive times. To say nothing of the other *Romish* sacraments: these things, one would think, should be enough with those who have ever studied their bible, to convince them, that popery is something very different from christianity. For if they are the same thing; why does popery so much abound in rituals, and lay such a stress upon them? why are not papists content with Christ's own directions, which in the ritual kind are very few? why will they ordain so many rites and ceremonies of their own? and why especially

especially will they bind them all upon the consciences of people, *as of necessity to salvation?* Yet this is the very case of this article's enjoining the *reception of the approved rites of the church*, compared with the conclusion of the creed, where the whole is declared to be of such importance, that *without it no man can be saved*. But the same thing is more fully and clearly expressed by the council of *Trent*: which directly pronounces * *anathema* upon *any man who shall say, that the received and approved rites of the catholic church, accustomed to be practised in the solemn administration of the sacraments, may either be contemned, or without sin omitted by the ministers*: and every one knows, that by the *catholic church* they mean their own.

Concerning the sacraments themselves, this article roundly affirms, that *Jesus Christ has instituted seven, as necessary to the salvation of mankind*: and the † council of *Trent* pronounces *accursed* all those, *who shall say, that Christ instituted more or less than seven*. But how shall we come to know that Christ has instituted such a number of sacraments; and which they are? Where is the institution? In what part of the new testament is it to be found? Protestants in general are so unhappy, that they are not able to find it. But besides: if any thing like an institution could be found out for all these seven sacraments; where is the promise, by virtue of which they *confer grace*? And further; where and when did our Lord make them all *necessary*
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* Sess. VII. de sacram. can. 13.

† Sess. VII. de sacram. can. 1.

to the salvation of mankind? Their saving clause will not help them in this case; wherein they say, that *these sacraments are not all necessary to every one*. For there may be cases, wherein, according to the express tenor of the gospel constitution, and the declaration of Christ himself, not one of them shall be *necessary to salvation*: for example, when a man is convinced of the truth of the christian doctrine, and with his very heart and soul embraces it, but has not by the providence of God an opportunity for having any one of these ordinances administered to him. Such was the case of the thief on the cross: who, according to the acknowledgment of Christ himself, became a hearty believer in him just before his death, and had the promise of *entering with him that day into paradise*. This indeed is no ground of encouragement for despising or neglecting any institution, which really has the stamp of Christ's authority, when the good providence of God allows opportunity to comply with it: nor would I dare to promise safety to any man in that case. But however, it is a proper rebuke to the confidence of pope *Pius*; who declares all the seven *Romish* sacraments to be *necessary to the salvation of mankind*: and of the council of *Trent*; which curses to the pit of hell * *all those who shall say they are not necessary to salvation*; and curses || *all those likewise, who shall say that any one of the seven is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ*.

But besides the presumption of these declarations, and the unchristian bitterness of the curses, there

* Concil. Trid. Sess. VII. de sacram. can. 4.

|| can. 1.

there are corruptions of a pernicious nature in the doctrinal part of the *Romish* sacraments. The very notion of an *indeleble character, given in baptism*, which is the reason assigned by the * council of *Florence* why that ordinance should not be reiterated, has a tendency to make children, when they grow up, neglect inward and real religion as unnecessary. And as the same *indeleble character* is likewise affirmed to be † *impressed on the soul* in the sacrament of confirmation, which is usually administered to very young people; the same dangerous indolence is hereby more encouraged. By the same *indeleble character*, communicated in the sacrament of orders, the wicked men among the clergy, who 'tis to be feared amount to a large number, are hardened in their wickedness. 'Tis much to the like purpose, that the council of *Florence* ‡ affirms concerning the sacrament of the eucharist, that *in respect of sustenance, increase, recruit, and delight, it operates all that effect with regard to the spiritual life, which material food and drink operate with regard to the corporeal*. And from this doctrine, and from the commands of the || canon law to give this sacrament as a *viaticum* to dying malefactors and others, it is no wonder that the common people should look upon it as a sort of charm in the very external action itself, to defend the soul

* Concil. Flor. apud Labbé, tom. XIII. pag. 535. † *ibid.*

‡ Omnem effectum, quem materialis cibus & potus quoad vitam agunt corporalem, sustentando, augendo, reparando & delectando; sacramentum hoc quoad vitam operatur spiritalem. Labbé, Concil. tom. XIII. pag. 537.

|| Decr. part. II. caus. 13. quæst. 2. cap. 30. Decret. Gregor. lib. V. tit. 18. cap. 2. tit. 38. cap. 11. Clementin. lib. V. tit. 9. cap. 1.

soul from all evil, and thereby incur the danger of neglecting the true design of sacraments, and of becoming strangers to serious religion. Transubstantiation, another doctrinal part of this sacrament, will be considered in an article by itself, and therefore I shall say nothing of it now.

But how abominably does the church of *Rome* usurp the divine prerogative, and enslave the consciences of men, in their pretended sacrament of penance? How directly do auricular confession and priestly absolution, as established and practised in that church, tend to make vicious men despise the thought of restraining corrupt affections; when they see, that upon confessing to a priest, submitting to the penance enjoined, and receiving absolution, which it is no difficult matter to come at, they may repeat their beloved sins as often as they will, and make no doubt of getting a compleat absolution from all sins when they come to die? And what miserable straits are the * papists reduced to, for supporting this their sacrament of penance, when they are forced to have their chief recourse to expressions which are manifestly figurative; such as those of our Saviour, *John XX. 22, 23.* and *Mat. XVIII. 16.* and in opposition both to reason and scripture will needs take them in a literal sense? The former of these texts is a commission given by our Lord to his apostles: and, upon comparing it with other passages of the new testament, plainly appears to relate to the awful effects of their preaching that gospel, the reception of which would secure the forgiveness of sins, and

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* See Grounds of cath. doct. pag. 21.

the rejection of which would fasten men's sins upon them. It is in reality the same commission, which was given in plainer words, *Mark XVI. 15, 16. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* The apostles, by their preaching, were to be the happy instruments of conveying this salvation: and therefore their preaching is, in a figurative way of speech, not unaptly stiled *remitting of sin*. And in like manner all good christians, even they who are not sent forth to preach, are assured by the apostle *James, V. 20.* that if they become the happy means of *converting a sinner from the error of his way, they shall save a soul from death.* And as the word preached by the apostles would be sure to have its effect, whether received or rejected: so the apostles, who preached it, might for the same reason be said to *retain the sins* of those who rejected it, as to *remit the sins* of those who embraced it. The scriptures abound with figurative expressions of this kind; where the effect is ascribed to the instrument employed, even in cases where it is most evident, that God himself is the grand efficient. So *Jer. I. 9, 10.* God himself tells the prophet, *See I have set thee this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down; to build and to plant.* The meaning of which expressions, it is manifest, can be no more, than that God sent him to deliver to the nations that word of his, which, if not complied with, should have these terrible effects. It is plain, by the
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the conduct of the apostles, that they thus understood their master's words in the XXth of *John*; and not of receiving secret confessions, and thereupon giving absolution: for there is not one syllable in the whole new testament which intimates they were ever so employed. And yet they must have been the fittest men in the world to grant such absolutions: and accordingly such crouds would have flocked daily to them, that they would have had no time to do any thing else, if they themselves had believed that Christ gave them authority for that purpose.

As to that other text, *Mat. XVIII.* it signifies, that wherever any society of christians, acting agreeably to the known mind of Christ, withdrew from a disorderly person, their conduct therein should be ratified and approved of God; and that they should have the same divine approbation when, upon such persons repentance, they received him again. But all this is spoken to the apostles, not in their apostolical character, but considered in general as subjects of *the kingdom of heaven*; as appears from the foregoing parts of the same chapter.

As to the power of *binding and loosing*, promised to St. Peter, *Mat. XVI. 19.* that has a manifest connexion with the grant made to him of *the keys of the kingdom of heaven*; that is, of opening the doctrine of that kingdom, by being first employed to preach it. And thus the words perfectly agree with that other figurative text, *John XX.* concerning the awful effects of preaching Christ's gospel.

But from such figurative expressions as these, for mortal men to pretend to forgive the sins of

their fellow-creatures, in the character of * *presidents* and *judges*; and, in order to this forgiveness, to impose what punishments they please, as the *Romish* priests do, in their sacrament of penance; is, I think, little better than a blasphemous perversion of Christ's words, to a sense which 'tis impossible should ever have entered into his mind.

But 'tis plain, that the *Romish* Clergy have been long since resolved to get all power, of every kind, into their own hands: and since they had no other way to arrive at temporal power, than by pretending that it is the consequence of their fullness of spiritual power, committed to them by Jesus Christ; no wonder, that they have caught at any appearances from such words of our Saviour, as they thought might most easily be perverted to their purpose. It is too evident, that with this view they have abused the texts just now considered. And when by such methods the laity have been persuaded, that it was in the power of priests to *forgive* or to *retain their sins*; no wonder that upon their claim the ignorant people, and ignorant superstitious princes too, have been ready to give up all power into their hands. It was after a train of such impudent claims on the one hand, and wretched submissions on the other, that pope *Boniface*

* The council of *Trent* not only ascribes to priests the character of *presidents and judges*, for remitting or retaining of sins; Sess. XIV. cap. 5. *de pœnit.* and speaks of the penitents in confession as brought before a tribunal, that by the sentence of the priest they may be delivered from their sins; cap. 1. but in the 9th canon of the same session pronounces a solemn *anathema* upon any one who shall deny, that the sacramental absolution of the priest is a judicial act.

face VIII. had the assurance to say, what is since made an authentic part of the canon law: * *Both swords are in the power of the church; to wit, the spiritual sword, and the material: but this indeed is to be exercised for the church; that by the church: this by the hand of the priest; that by the hand of kings and soldiers, but at the beck and according to the patience of the priest. Now it is necessary, that there be a sword under a sword; and that the temporal authority be subject to the spiritual power.-----Therefore if the earthly power deviates from its duty, it shall be judged by the spiritual power: if the inferior spiritual power deviates, it shall be judged by its superior: but if the supreme, by God alone; it cannot be judged by man.*

The pernicious tendency, and the dreadful real consequences of the *Romish* sacrament of penance, with regard to the unlimited power which it puts into the hands of the priest, by revealing to him every secret of the penitent's mind, must be my apology for spending so much time upon it. It must be own'd, that all the *Romish* sacraments are not equally corrupt and dangerous; and that many things in them might be borne with, if there was not such a stress laid upon them. Thus as to confirmation; it is notorious, that great numbers of protestants practise it. And if any christians

* *Uterque ergo est in potestate ecclesiæ; spiritalis scilicet gladius, & materialis: sed is quidem pro ecclesia, ille vero ab ecclesia exercendus; ille sacerdotis, is manu regum & militum, sed ad nutum & patientiam sacerdotis. Oportet autem gladium esse sub gladio, & temporalem auctoritatem spiritali subjici potestati.—Ergo si deviat terrena potestas, judicabitur à potestate spiritali: sed si deviat spiritalis minor, à suo superiori: si vero suprema; à solo Deo, non ab homine poterit judicari. Extrav. commun. de major. & obed. lib. 1. tit. 8. cap. 1.*

christians choose to have their pastor lay hands on catechumens, and pray for them, after they have been well instructed in the faith, into the profession of which they were baptized; who shall hinder them? But this is not enough in the church of *Rome*. There this is made a sacrament, *necessary to salvation*: an *indeleble character* is said to be thereby impress'd upon the soul: and 'tis affirm'd by the council of *Florence*, that ** the Holy Ghost is therein given for strength, as he was given to the apostles on the day of pentecost; to the end that the christian may boldly confess the name of Christ.*

In like manner we might say with regard to extreme unction: if any christians are satisfied, that their *elders* have that *inwrought prayer of faith*, which in the days of the apostle † *James* was used over the sick, and which was effectual for their recovery; by all means let it be used. But then let it be remember'd, that this is quite a different thing from the *Romish* sacrament: where the unction is applied to ‡ those only, whose life is despaired of, and with a view to their death, and not to their recovery; where it is used chiefly with the view of remitting sins, and healing the soul; and with regard to which the || council of *Trent* damns you to hell, if you will not acknowledge it to be *a sacrament instituted by Christ*; or if you deny ** that *it remits sins*; or affirm, that *it has ceased, as being originally only a gift of healing.* Again:

* Effectus autem hujus sacramenti est, quia in eo datur Spiritus sanctus ad robur, sicut datus est apostolis in die pentecostes; ut videlicet christianus audacter Christi confiteatur nomen. *Labbé, tom. XIII. pag. 536.*

† Jam. V. 15, 16.

‡ Concil. Trid. Sess. XIV. de extrem. unct. cap. 3.

Ibid. can. 1.

** can. 2.

Again : if any man enters into holy orders, or a marriage state ; let him behave himself suitably to the obligations he takes upon him. But then, let not those who enter into orders pretend that they do thereby *receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*, in the same sense in which St. Paul put *Timothy* in mind he had received it *by the imposition of his hands* : 2 *Tim.* I. 6. And further, let it be ask'd ; why are these two obligations, of orders and marriage, by the church of *Rome* made inconsistent with each other ? when neither Christ nor his apostles ever forbade ministers to marry ; when *Paul* asserted his power for that purpose, and observed that *Peter* and other apostles were married men. 1 *Cor.* IX. 5. The author of the * *Grounds* does very well in acknowledging here, that ‘ the reason why the church does not allow of the marriage of the clergy, is because upon their entering into holy orders they make a vow or solemn promise to God and the church, to live continently : and that she receives none to holy orders, but those that make this vow, because she does not think it proper that they, who by their office and functions ought to be wholly devoted to the service of God and the care of souls, should be diverted from these duties by the distractions of a married life.’ The whole affair is here very justly and truly put upon the will and pleasure of the church. But who gave the church the power thus to determine ? who gave her the power to require this vow of the clergy ? when God himself laid no such restriction ; and when indeed

indeed he has plainly signified, that he avoided such restrictions to any kind of persons, *to the end that they might live continently*. As for the advice given by the apostle, 1 Cor. VII. 32, 33. that related only to the then *present distress*; as appears from ver. 26. And yet, in the very same chapter, ver. 2. he actually recommended marriage, for the sake of *living continently*, to all persons without exception. And writing to Timothy, 1 Tim. IV. 1, 3. he makes *the forbidding to marry* a mark of *seducing spirits*, and a *doctrine of devils*. And what mischiefs the pretended celibacy of the *Romish* clergy has introduced, by their innumerable whoredoms, adulteries, and murders of the spurious offspring, and by making the clergy a body distinct from, and of an opposite interest to the laity, their history will abundantly testify.

But there is one corruption, which has not yet been mentioned : which extends itself to all the *Romish* sacraments; and which, tho' it was plainly designed to give the priests a plenitude of power, yet in its natural consequences falls as heavy upon themselves as upon the people. It is the doctrine of the necessity of the priest's good intention, in order to the efficacy of the sacraments he administers. This is mentioned by the † council of *Florence*, in the following words, after the mention of all the seven sacraments. *All these sacraments are made up of three parts:*
that

† Hæc omnia sacramenta tribus perficiuntur: videlicet rebus, tanquam materiâ; verbis, tanquam formâ; & personâ ministri conferentis sacramentum, cum intentione faciendi quod facit ecclesia. Quorum si aliquid deficit, non perficitur sacramentum. *Labbé, Concil. tom. XIII. pag. 535.*

that is to say, of things, as the matter ; of words, as the form ; and of the person of the minister who confers the sacrament, with the intention of doing that which the church does : of which parts if any one be wanting, the sacrament is not perfected. Nay, such a stress do they lay upon the right intention of the minister ; as rather to allow the validity of ministrations, which themselves will by no means own to be regular, than to drop this grand point. Thus, within a few sentences after that just now quoted : tho' they insist, that a * priest is the proper minister of the sacrament of baptism, and that to him it belongs by his office to baptize ; yet, in what they call cases of necessity, they allow a layman, or a woman, or even a pagan, and a heretic, to baptize : but still they make it necessary, that the form of the church be observed, and that the person ministering *intend to do that which the church does.*

Now the chief thing I wou'd observe here is the wicked arrogance, of presuming to suspend, upon the meer will and pleasure of the minister, all the good effects designed by Christ in his ordinances ; for the papists insist upon it, that all their seven sacraments are ordinances of Christ. Let them shew, as well as they can, the consistency of this doctrine with the article now under consideration ; which affirms, that all the seven sacraments confer grace. It must be only on condition that the priest thinks fit to let them.

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* Minister hujus sacramenti est sacerdos ; cui ex officio competit baptizare. In causa autem necessitatis, non solum sacerdos vel diaconus, sed etiam laicus vel mulier, imo etiam paganus & hæreticus baptizare potest ; dummodo formam servet ecclesie, & facere intendat quod facit ecclesia. *Ibid.*

Bat it is farther observable ; that, according to this doctrine, it is impossible for a *Romanist* to prove, that there is now any such thing as a priest, or indeed a christian in the world ; because no man can certainly tell, whether the person, from whom he received orders or baptism, perform'd the service with the intention which the church requires.

From the account which has been given of the *Romish* sacraments it is easy to see : that they are attended with much superstition ; and with such gross corruptions, as are utterly inconsistent with the purity of Christ's doctrine : that they tend to draw off mens regards to inward and real religion : that the authority, by which they are bound upon the people, is inconsistent with the obedience which we owe to our great legislator ; and the cruel bitterness, with which they are enforced, quite opposite to the meek spirit of christianity.

The fourth article of *Pius's* creed is as follows.

IV. *I embrace and receive all and every thing, which hath been defined and declared in the holy synod of Trent concerning original sin and justification.*

Now the least that a man can do, to qualify himself to be a believer in this article, is to get himself well acquainted with *all those things,*
which

which the synod of Trent has defined and declared concerning these two points. And how the common people in all christian countries shall be able to do this, it will be some difficulty to conceive. But in case all of them did come at the historical knowledge of all that the council of Trent has declared and defined; the difficulty would be to bring them to a thorough satisfaction, that all those declarations and decrees are right and good. Indeed, if the former articles are allowed, which require us to interpret scripture only in that sense which the church holds, and to observe all ecclesiastical traditions; then there can be no dispute about this, or any other point. And therefore, one would think, pope Pius might have saved himself the trouble of adding any more articles at all; unless it were the XIth, wherein the good catholic promises unlimited obedience; or the XIIth, which curses and condemns all those who do not embrace whatever the church in its councils has decreed. But if the scripture is indeed the word of God; and if, instead of popes and councils, this is the rule of our faith: then how shall a private christian, of common understanding, be able to pronounce, with the council of Trent, that all of human kind have lost their holiness and righteousness by the sin of Adam; (sess. V. § 2. decr. de peccato origin.) and yet make an exception, which the scripture no where makes, for the virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord? (See the conclusion of the same decree.) And with regard to justification: how shall he reconcile the words of this council, sess. VI. can. 32. which affirm, that a justified

that immediately after saying, *this is my body*, Christ added, *which is broken for you*. Now the *Romanists* themselves acknowledge, that at the time of instituting the holy supper Christ's body was not yet broken upon the cross; and that therefore in these words he spoke figuratively, concerning what was to be done. Why not therefore in those just before, which our Lord delivered in the same breath? So likewise, in St. *Luke's* recital of the institution, chap. XXII. 20. we find our Lord said, *this cup is the new testament*, [or new † covenant] *in my blood, which is shed for you*. Now besides that here, as before, the blood was not yet shed, and therefore the expression was manifestly figurative, referring to what would shortly be done; why do not the *Romanists* allow, that *the cup*, the very cup, which Christ held in his hand, and which contained the wine representing his blood, was literally and really a *testament*, or *covenant*, as well as contend, from a like expression, that *the bread* was *Christ's body*?

These observations, taken from the institution itself, plainly shew; that the apostle's words, 1 Cor. X. 16. where *the cup of blessing* is said to be *the communion of the blood of Christ*, and *the bread broken*, *the communion of the body of Christ*, cannot signify a real receiving of the *body and blood of Christ*, as the author of the * *Grounds* pretends. For the real body and blood never were received, nor intended to be received, even by the apostles themselves, who were present at the institution. They, and in them all disciples of Christ, were commanded to keep up, by the

actions of eating bread and drinking wine, the remembrance of Christ, when he should be absent from them, and not present with them : and indeed, the very reason why they were here-*in to remember Christ*, was because in his bodily presence he should not be with them. *The cup of blessing* therefore is *the communion of Christ's blood*; and *the bread broken*, *the communion of his body*; as, by partaking of both, christians commemorate their Lord and Saviour, in obedience to his institution, and thereby acknowledge themselves his disciples. And this is the manifest view, with which the apostle uses this argument; as may be seen by its connexion with the preceding and following verses.

So when the same apostle says, 1 Cor. XI. 27, 29. *Whoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of our Lord*; and *he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh * judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body*; he can mean no more, than that such a person is guilty of a very unbecoming neglect of the great design of that ordinance, wherein it is his duty to remember with thankfulness, that Christ's body was broken, and Christ's blood shed for him; and that he brings just judgment upon himself, by having no due regard to that, which by the command of his Lord and Saviour he is obliged thankfully to remember. *Not discerning the Lord's body* is, not considering the bread in the holy supper as the appointed memorial of that body; not making a sufficient difference between the bread eaten at the Lord's table

the doctrine of transubstantiation was received even in the church of *Rome* itself.

This article is indeed a very proper criterion of a thorough submission to the church; a very fit trial, whether men will give up their reason, and even the testimony of their senses themselves, to her authority: for if a man will submit here, he is pretty well secured for all other submissions; if he stands out here, there is great danger that he will hearken to the testimony of sense and reason in other matters. It is therefore no wonder, that so great a stress is laid upon this one article: and that so many precious lives have been sacrificed by the church of *Rome* to the resolution of maintaining it. But in this eagerness of her resolution she cuts off one of the main arguments for the credibility of the whole christian doctrine. For if there is no depending upon the testimony of sense: then in vain did Christ himself appeal to the miracles he wrought, as evidences of his divine mission; and in vain do we now shew any regard to them. Either therefore Christ's miracles are no argument of the credibility of the christian religion: or else the doctrine of transubstantiation, which contradicts the testimony upon which those miracles stand, is false and absurd.

But to return to pope *Pius's* creed. As to that part of this article, which affirms *the Mass to contain a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of quick and dead*: it is so gainful a point, and of so much importance, in promising to men the forgiveness of their own sins and those of their deceased friends; that it signifies nothing

thing to object against it the plain declarations of the author to the *Hebrews*, ch. IX. 26, 28. X. 10, 14. that *Christ once in the end of the world appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; that he was once offered, to bear the sins of many; that we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all; and that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them who are sanctified.* All these, it seems, and a thousand more declarations of scripture, must stand for nothing, when once the authority of the church is concerned in an article of faith. Yet; to those who have any regard to scripture, these texts plainly shew; that, under the dispensation of the gospel, Christ is the only priest who could offer propitiatory sacrifice; and that he has done it completely once for all. It is not therefore in the power of any person upon earth to repeat that sacrifice, which Christ alone could offer: besides that by offering *it once for all*, Christ shewed he did not design it should ever be repeated. The only sacrifices the new testament acknowledges left for men to offer, are those of *praise and thanksgiving*, and *doing good* to one another, out of gratitude towards God; *Heb. XIII. 15, 16.* And as for offering any sacrifice in behalf of the dead; the new testament knows nothing of it: but on the contrary signifies, that, upon leaving this present state of trial, mens condition is so determin'd, that *every one shall, at the judgment seat of Christ, receive the things done in his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* 2 Cor. V. 10. And consequently any sacrifices offered in their behalf can avail nothing. But

VI. [76]

notwithstanding all this, the church of *Rome* will be obeyed: and accordingly, it is thus decreed in the synod of *Trent*. * *If any man shall say; that the sacrifice of the Mass is only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a meer commemoration of the sacrifice completed on the cross, but not propitiatory; or that it is profitable only to the receiver; or that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, for punishments, for satisfactions, and other necessities: let him be accursed.*

VI. *I also confess, that under one kind only, whole and intire Christ, and a true sacrament is received.*

In pursuance of this article, the *Romish* church allows to the people only the bread in the celebration of the Lord's supper, the wine being received by the priest alone: herein relying intirely on their own authority, without the least authority from Christ the lawgiver, but in a direct opposition to him. For Christ himself, in the institution of this ordinance, gave not the least intimation of a difference intended between ministers and people, in giving the bread and the wine

* Si quis dixerit, Missæ sacrificium tantum esse laudis & gratiarum actionis, aut nudam commemorationem sacrificii in cruce peracti, non autem propitiatorium; vel soli prodesse famenti; neque pro vivis & defunctis, pro peccatis, poenis, satisfactionibus, & alijs necessitatibus offerri debere: anathema sit. *Conc. Trid. Sess. XXII. de sacrif. Missæ, cæn. 3.*

wine to the one, and the bread only to the other : nor do any of his apostles, or any of the new testament writers, intimate any thing like a direction given to them for this purpose. *S^t Paul*, 1 *Cor.* XI. when he relates to the *Corinthians what he had received from the Lord*, concerning the institution, gives the same account as the Evangelists ; that our Lord celebrated this ordinance, at its institution, to the apostles in the character of *disciples* only. In this character he tells the *Corinthians*, ch. XI. 26. *As often as YE eat this bread, AND DRINK THIS CUP, ye shew the Lord's death till he come.* He writes these words to the *Corinthian* church, the members in general of the *Corinthian* church ; and not to the ministers, exclusive of the people. One would think therefore, that the church of *Rome* withheld the cup from the people merely to shew her authority and power, in dispensing with, or rather, in opposing directly, the laws of her professed Lord and Master. Whether the council of *Constance* does not acknowledge this, let their own words, in the following decree, testify for them. * *In the name of the holy and undivided*

* In nomine sanctæ & individue Trinitatis, Patris, Filii, & Sp. sancti, Amen.—Hoc præfens concilium sacrum generale— declarat, decernit, & diffinit : quod licet Christus post cœnam instituerit, & suis discipulis administraverit, sub utraque specie panis & vini, hoc venerabile sacramentum : tamen, *hoc non obstante*, sacrorum canonum auctoritas laudabilis, & approbata consuetudo ecclesiæ servavit & servat, quod hujusmodi sacramentum non debet confici post cœnam, neque à fidelibus recipi non jejunis, nisi in casu infirmitatis, aut alterius necessitatis, à jure vel ecclesiæ concessio vel admisso. Et sicut hæc consuetudo, ad evitandum aliqua pericula & scandala, est rationabiliter introducta, quod, licet in primitiva ecclesiâ hujusmodi sacramentum reciperetur à fidelibus sub utraque specie,

vided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Amen—This present sacred general council—declares, decrees, and determines: that altho' Christ instituted and administered to his disciples this venerable sacrament after supper, under both kinds, of bread and wine: yet, this notwithstanding, the laudable authority of sacred canons and the approved custom of the church hath maintained and doth maintain; that such a sacrament as this ought not to be made after supper, nor to be received by the faithful otherwise than fasting; excepting in case of infirmity, or other necessity, granted or admitted by law, or by the church. And since, for the avoiding of some dangers and scandals, the custom has been rationally introduced, that tho' this sacrament was in the primitive church received by the faithful under both kinds, and afterwards, by the makers of it, under both kinds, and by the laity only under the species of bread:—
such

cie, postea à conficientibus sub utraque specie, & à laicis tantummodo sub specie panis suscipiatur:—hujusmodi consuetudo—habenda est pro lege; quam non licet reprobare, aut sine ecclesiæ auctoritate pro libito mutare.—Asserentes oppositum præmissorum, tanquam hæretici, arcendi sunt, & graviter puniendi, per diocesanos locorum, seu officiales eorum, aut inquisitores hæreticæ pravitatis.—Item ipsa sancta synodus decernit & declarat, super ista materia, reverendissimis—archiepiscopis, episcopis, & eorum in spiritualibus vicariis, ubilibet constitutis, processus esse dirigendos: in quibus eis committatur & mandetur, auctoritate hujus sacri concilii, sub pœna excommunicationis, ut effectualiter puniant eos contra hoc decretum excedentes, qui communicando populum sub utraque specie panis & vini exhortati fuerint, & sic faciendum esse docuerint. Et si ad poenitentiam redierint, ad gremium ecclesiæ suscipiantur, injuncta eis, pro modo culpæ, poenitentia salutari. Qui vero ex illis ad poenitentiam redire non curaverint animo indurato, per censuras ecclesiasticas per eos, ut hæretici, sunt coercendi, invocato etiam ad hoc, si opus fuerit, auxilio brachii secularis. *Cons. Constant. apud Labbé, tom. XII. pag. 100.*

*such a custom as this --- is to be accounted a law, which must not be rejected, or at pleasure changed, without the authority of the church. They who assert the contrary, are to be driven away as heretics, and severely punished, by the diocesans of the places, or their officials, or by the inquisitors of heretical pravity. Presently after which the same council further decrees and declares to the most reverend--- archbishops and bishops, and their vicars in spiritual affairs, wheresoever placed, that processes shall be directed: in which it is committed and commanded to them, by the authority of the council, under pain of excommunication, that they effectually punish the violators of this decree, who communicating to the people under both kinds, shall have exhorted and taught that it ought so to be done. If these return to repentance, they may be received into the bosom of the church, after enjoining them a wholesome penance, according to the measure of their fault. But those of them who, thro' the hardness of their heart, do not take care to return to repentance, are by these [spiritual men] to be restrained as heretics, calling in also to this purpose, if need be, the aid of the secular arm. A stronger instance of church authority than this, one cannot reasonably desire. And indeed the council of Trent itself seems to have been so well satisfied with the provision here made, for punishments of this world against those who should dare to deny, that their half-sacrament is equal to the whole; as to be content with only denouncing * *anathema* against them.*

But

* Conc. Trident. Sess. XIII. de euchar. can. 3. & Sess. XXI. can. 3.

But farther it is observable, that this article is not thoroughly consistent with the preceding. For the preceding article tells you, that *there is a change made, of the whole substance of the bread into Christ's body, and of the whole substance of the wine into Christ's blood*: whereas this article says, that *under one kind only, whole and intire Christ is received*. To solve this difficulty, the *Romanists* * allege; that 'the body cannot be without the blood; and that therefore whoever receives the body of Christ, receives Christ himself whole and intire.' But did not Christ himself know all this as well as they? And why did he, notwithstanding this, ordain the communion in both kinds, if he did not design that in both kinds his disciples should receive it? Why should the priest receive in both kinds, any more than the rest of the faithful? What commission or authority has he for that purpose, any other than that which gives a right to all christians? If it be said; † that 'this is requisite for the more lively representing the separation of Christ's blood from his body:' it is still answered, that Christ himself made no such difference; designing that this ordinance should in a lively manner represent to all the faithful the separation of his blood from his body. Moreover, he commanded that his disciples should *remember*, or commemorate him, *in drinking this cup*, as well as *in eating this bread*; 1 Cor. XI. 25. But his command, it seems, is to stand for nothing.

The ‡ reasons usually given, why the church of *Rome* does not give the communion in both kinds,

* Grounds, pag. 28.

† pag. 30.

‡ pag. 31.

kinds, are exceedingly trifling. As to the danger of spilling; Christ himself knew that: and yet the council of *Constance* owns he instituted the sacrament in both kinds. And besides; the priest is not absolutely secure against this terrible danger of spilling a drop, any more than the people. Another reason is, 'because wine will soon decay; and therefore the sacrament could not well be kept for the sick in both kinds: another, because some constitutions can neither endure the taste nor smell of wine: another, because true wine in some countries is very hard to be met with.' But Christ knew all these things as well as the church of *Rome*: nor does it appear he ever designed to have *consecrated wine*, or *consecrated bread*, laid up for the use of the sick: and if some constitutions cannot bear wine; other constitutions, of which I my self have seen an instance, cannot endure bread: and then, if good wine is not to be had, good christians will be content with what they can get. But their master-piece of a reason is, that they with-hold the cup * 'in opposition to those heretics, who deny that Christ is received whole and entire under either kind.' Now, 'tis plain, that Christ himself had not this notion: otherwise he would not have ordained the communion in both kinds. But, it seems, if Christ himself ordains any thing, which the church of *Rome* disapproves; he himself shall be a heretic, rather than they will fail of being obeyed.

I think it proper here to take notice of a fallacious criticism of the author of *the Grounds, &c.*

* *Grounds*, pag. 31.

who † charges our protestant translators with *corrupting* the text in 1 Cor. XI. 27. by putting *and* instead of *or*, in relation to *drinking the cup*. Now this criticism will no way prove, that the communion in one kind only was sufficient to answer Christ's intention. For it only shews, that if either part of Christ's ordinance be *unworthily* received; that is, if a man partakes of either the *bread* or the *cup*, without any serious regard to the design of the ordinance, which is a thankful remembrance of Christ; he brings a guilt upon himself. In the mean time, the words immediately preceding, in ver. 26. assure us, that it is both by *eating of the bread*, and by *drinking of the cup*, that *we shew forth the Lord's death till he come*: and therefore, tho' our translation is not exactly literal, yet there is no *corruption in the case*.

But I cannot dismiss this article, without quoting from the council of *Florence* a very extraordinary paragraph, which has a near relation both to this and the preceding. Concerning the eucharist they say: * *The priest, speaking in the name of Christ, maketh this sacrament. For, by virtue of the very words themselves, the substance of the bread is changed into the body of Christ, and the substance of the wine into his blood: yet so that whole Christ is contained under the species of bread, and whole under the species of wine: also in every part of the consecrated host and consecrated*

† pag. 30, 31.

* Sacerdos, in persona Christi loquens, hoc conficit sacramentum. Nam, ipsorum verborum virtute, substantia panis in corpus Christi, & substantia vini in sanguinem, convertuntur: ita tamen, quod totus Christus continetur sub specie panis, & totus sub specie vini; sub qualibet quoque parte hostiæ consecratæ & vini consecrati, separatione facta, totus est Christus. *Labbé, Concil. tom. XIII. pag. 537.*

crated wine, when a separation is made, there is whole Christ. Here they have told us how they dispose of the *body and blood* of our blessed Saviour. But what contrivance the church has made for *his soul and divinity*, to make good what is affirmed in the Vth and VIth articles of this creed; whether they mean, that there are as many *souls and divinities*, as according to their doctrine there are *bodies*, of Christ; one in every bit of every consecrated host, and in every drop of consecrated wine; or how they have ordered it: I have not yet learned. Something of this kind, I take for granted, there must be: otherwise how, according to their own doctrine, can there be *whole Christ* in every bit and every drop? But sure I am, that no man, who has just sentiments of the wisdom, and righteousness, and goodness of the divine being, can ever, consistently with those sentiments, believe, that such a doctrine as this is *necessary to salvation*.

VII. *I stedfastly hold, that there is a purgatory: and that the souls there detained receive help by the suffrages of the faithful.*

This article receives its explication from those passages in the council of *Trent*, which teach us: *

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that

* Si quis, post acceptam justificationis gratiam, cuilibet peccatori poenitenti ita culpam remitti, & reatum æternæ poenæ deleri dixerit, ut nullus remaneat reatus poenæ temporalis, exsolvendæ vel in hoc seculo, vel in futuro in purgatorio, antequam ad regna cœlorum aditus patere possit: anathema sit. *sess. VI. can. 30. de justificatione.*

*that penitent sinners, notwithstanding their justification in the sight of God, still remain liable to punishment for their sins, to be inflicted either in this world or in purgatory, before they can arrive at the kingdom of heaven: and that * the Mass is a true propitiatory sacrifice, not only for the living, but for the dead in Christ, who are not yet fully cleansed; and that it is regularly offered up for that purpose, according to the tradition of the apostles.*

The whole relies upon a *tradition*, falsely ascribed to the apostles; there being nothing in their writings which favours any such doctrine, but many things contrary to it. The whole tenor of the doctrine of the apostles represents the present state as the only state of probation. The apostle *Paul* particularly, in the place already quoted, assures us, 2 Cor. V. 10. that as *we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; so every one of us shall receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* And such a doctrine as this has a proper and immediate tendency to make men careful of their present behaviour; diligent to settle good habits and dispositions in their minds, suited to the purity of the heavenly state, which is set before them in prospect: whereas the teaching men to hope, that after a careless, and even a vicious course of life in this world, their sins may be purged

* Sacrificium istud vere propitiatorium [sc. Missa] non solum pro fidelium vivorum peccatis, poenis, satisfactionibus, & aliis necessitatibus; sed & pro defunctis in Christo, nondum ad plenum purgatis, ritę, juxta Apostolorum traditionem, offertur. *Seff. XXII. de sacrif. Missę, cap. 2.*

purged away by the prayers of others, offered up for them after their death, is a direct encouragement to the neglect of all serious religion. But if the people were allowed to think thus; then vast treasures would be lost to the priests; for whose prayers, in behalf of the dead, the money is paid by the surviving relations.

And whereas it is pretended, * that 'souls which depart this life in God's grace, yet not without some lesser stains or guilt of punishment, which retard them from entering heaven, are for those little, or venial sins, as they are called, punished in purgatory:' that is utterly inconsistent with the doctrine of the new testament. Particularly, 'tis inconsistent with the declaration of the apostle, 1 John I. 7. *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* These words are evidently spoken concerning christians: and by affirming in general, that the *blood of Christ cleanseth them from all sins*, leave no pretence to imagine, that they are left to atone for their smaller sins by a temporal punishment in purgatory; particularly 'for such sins as even the best of God's servants are more or less liable to.' And yet for these, it is † affirmed, they go to purgatory; whereas the *Romanists* universally agree, that the wicked go not to purgatory, but to hell. It is inconsistent likewise with that text, Rev. XIV. 13. *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them,*

* Grounds, pag. 34, 37.

† Ibid.

them. For if ‘ christians, either by sudden death
 ‘ or otherwise, are taken out of this life before
 ‘ they have repented for their ordinary failings;
 ‘ or, if having been formerly guilty of greater
 ‘ sins, they have not made full atonement for
 ‘ them to the divine justice,’ (which is the pro-
 fane expression of the author of *the Grounds of*
cath. doct. p. 34.) but go to purgatory, not-
 withstanding that they *die in the Lord*: then ‘tis
 certain that they do not *rest from their labours*.
 On the contrary, unless they happen to have rich
 friends to pray them out, they are, according to
 the *Romish* doctrine, in a state of the most ex-
 treme torment; and may, for aught the church
 of *Rome* knows, remain therein even to the day
 of the resurrection; and this notwithstanding
 that * they ‘ depart this life in God’s grace, and
 ‘ have been guilty only of † venial frailties and
 ‘ imperfections, such as even God’s best ser-
 ‘ vants are more or less liable to.’

I might have added; that for the reasons above-
 mentioned, the doctrine of purgatory is inconsis-
 tent with the words of our blessed Saviour,
John V. 24. and with those of *St. Paul, Rom.*
 VIII. 1. But we are to remember, that this
 doctrine chiefly depends upon a pretended *apo-*
stolical tradition, no where to be found in the
 writings of the apostles, or in any part of the
 new testament; and that it is to such pretended
traditions, which are really the effect of crafty
 invention, long since the time of the apostles,
 that the church of *Rome* owes its chief support.

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* *Grounds*, pag. 34. † *Ibid.*

The *Romanists* indeed do not fail to quote scripture for their doctrine of purgatory. Particularly, they * produce the words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. III. 15. *If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.* But it is evident, that this *being saved so as by fire*, is used by the apostle only as a proverbial expression, to signify the difficulty and danger of such a person's condition, who has built *wood, hay, and stubble*; that is, worthless doctrines and traditions, like those of the church of Rome, upon the one and only foundation, *Jesus Christ*. A like proverbial expression is that of Jude, ver. 22. 23. *Of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* And to the like purpose is that in Amos, IV. 11. *Ye were as a firebrand, pluckt out of the burning.* But nothing can be infer'd from such expressions in favour of purgatory. Nor is there any more ground for it in that other proverbial expression, † Mat. XII. 32. *Whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come:* for this only signifies, in general, that this sin shall never be forgiven at all. This is the interpretation which two other evangelists give, in speaking of the very same thing. But if we were to take our Saviour's words in parts; will the *Romanists* pretend there shall in no sense be any forgiveness in the world to come? Shall not the faithful servants of God be solemnly acquitted of all sins at the day of judgment? Will not *their ‡ sins be blotted*

* Grounds, p. 35. † pag. 36. ‡ Acts III. 19.

blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord? However, whether this be the strict and proper sense of *forgiveness*, or not; the *Romish* purgatory is, even according to their own doctrine, no state of forgiveness, but of punishment: and therefore this text can do them no good in defence of that doctrine. No more can the words of St. *Peter*,* 1 *Pet.* III. 18, 19, 20. concerning *Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison*. For, whether this text is to be understood concerning a middle state or not; it is too obscure to found an article of faith upon; and manifestly one of those, of the exact meaning whereof a good christian may safely be ignorant or mistaken. Yet this, and likewise that passage, † *Mat.* V. 25, 26. relating to quite different affairs, is, for want of better proofs, forced into the service of purgatory. And so is that apocryphal text, ‡ 2 *Machab.* XII. 43, 44, 45. concerning *Judas's praying and offering a sin-offering, and making reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin*. But it is an odd kind of proceeding in an author, in order to prove by tradition that purgatory is a christian doctrine, first to assert, 'that the || *Jewish church* ' long before our Saviour's coming offered prayers ' and sacrifice for the repose and relief of the ' faithful departed; ' and then, for proof of a point so remote from his proper question, to have his only recourse to the books of *Machabees*; which books he himself, from the testimony of St. *Austin*, acknowledges the *Jews* do not account canonical. If he would prove this to have

* Grounds, pag. 36.

† *ibid.*‡ *ibid.*|| *ibid.*

have been the practice of the *Jews*; he should do it from some one or more books, which the *Jews* acknowledge to be canonical, and not from books which they have always rejected. And one would think, that when the books of *Machabees* first appeared, the *Jews* must have been the proper judges, whether they were genuine and canonical or not; since they treat wholly of the affairs of their nation, and were manifestly designed to favour their cause. Indeed, which is more to the purpose, the same author affirms, * that 'the christian church, from the very beginning, in all ages and nations, has offered prayers and sacrifices for the dead.' But even if he had shewn how early he dates this *beginning*, by producing the most ancient of his proofs, (and protestants do not deny that some corruptions had an early beginning) yet it wou'd avail but very little, while there is such a text to be found in the new testament, as that of St. Paul already quoted: which assures us, that *every one must at the judgment-seat of Christ receive the things done in his body, (i. e. done in the present state of trial) according to that which he hath done, whether it be good, or whether it be bad.* For the plain consequence of this is, that prayers and sacrifices, offer'd up for us after we are *out of the body*, come too late to do us any service.

VIII. *I do likewise stedfastly hold, that the saints reigning with Christ are to be*
M *venerated*

* Grounds, p. 36.

venerated and invocated; and that they offer up prayers to God for us; and that their reliques are to be had in veneration.

The praying to saints, that they may pray for us, is directly constituting them mediators between God and us. And the practice of praying to them with this view is so far from being denied by the *Romish* church, that it is made a part of their publick devotions. Thus a great part of their * litany consists of immediate addressees to the virgin Mary, to St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael, and all the holy angels and archangels, and all the holy orders of blessed spirits; to St. John the baptist, and all the holy patriarchs and prophets; to St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Andrew, and all the holy apostles and evangelists by name; and then again to all of them together, without their names; to all the holy disciples of our Lord, and all the holy innocents; to St. Stephen, St. Laurence, St. Vincent, St. Fabian and Sebastian, St. Anthony, St. Benedict, St. Francis, St. Dominic, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Agnes, St. Catharine, and a vast number of other saints, both male and female, by name; besides a general application to all the holy martyrs, to all the holy popes and confessors, all the holy doctors, all the holy monks and hermits, all the holy priests and Levites, all the holy virgins and widows; with the addition of these words to every name, or every article, *pray for us*; and after all this, that no
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* Ritual. Roman. Antwerp. ap. Plantin. 1635. pag. 107, 108, 109, 110.

one mediator may be neglected, this general prayer is added ; *O all ye holy men, and holy women of God, intercede for us.*

But besides these general applications, it is almost endless to enumerate the particular prayers addressed to particular saints, especially to the virgin *Mary* ; some of them asking the intercession of these saints with Christ and with God the Father ; and others directly asking of the saints themselves a deliverance from all evils, in this life, and in that which is to come. To this purpose * the song ascribed to *St. Ambrose* and *St. Austin*, commonly called *Te Deum*, is turned into a hymn of praise to the virgin *Mary* : and after professing to her, that *all angels and arch-angels and principalities humbly serve her* ; that *all the high powers and celestial dominations obey her* ; that *every angelical creature with a delightful voice proclaims her holy, holy, holy Mary, the virgin mother of God* ; that *the glorious choir of apostles praises her* ; that *the assembly of blessed martyrs glorifies her* ; that *the whole celestial court honours her as the queen of heaven* ; and after calling her *the vein of mercy, and the refuge of a sinner* ; the

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address

* *Tibi omnes angeli & archangeli ; tibi omnes principatus humiliati serviunt : tibi omnes potestates & supernæ virtutes ; tibi omnes cœlorum dominationes obediunt : te cuncta angelica creatura delectabili voce proclamat, sancta, sancta, sancta Maria, mater Dei & virgo : te gloriosus apostolorum chorus creatoris matrem collaudat : te martyrum cœtus beatorum Christi genitricem glorificat : te tota cœlestis curia cœlorum reginam honorat : — tu vena es misericordiæ, tu refugium peccatoris. — Salva nos, populum servorum tuorum ; ut simus participes hæreditatis tuæ : dignare, dulcis Maria, nunc & semper sine delicto nos custodire : miserere nostri, domina ; miserere nostri : fiat misericordia tua magna nobiscum, quia, Maria, in te confidimus : in te, dulcis Maria, speravimus, ut nos defendas in æternum. Amen. Hortulus animæ, ad usum Romanum ; Antwerp. ap. Plantin. 1566. pag. 227, 228, 229.*

address ends with these petitions: *save us, the people of thy servants; that we may be partakers of thy inheritance; vouchsafe, o sweet Mary, now and always to keep us without sin; have mercy upon us, Lady, have mercy upon us; let thy mercy be great towards us, because, o Mary, we put our trust in thee; in thee, o sweet Mary, we have hoped, that thou maiest defend us for ever. Amen.*

To the same purpose are numerous other prayers to the blessed virgin. One of which has these words: * *I beseech thee ---- that in the holy, tremendous, and terrible judgment, in the sight of thy only begotten Son, to whom the Father gave all judgment, thou wouldest rescue and protect me from the punishments of hell, and make me partaker of celestial joys.* Another has the following. † *Comfort the sinner; and give not thy honour to another, or to a cruel one, I beseech thee, o queen of heaven. Have me excused before Christ thy son; whose anger I fear, and of whose fury I am afraid. For against thee only, o virgin Mary, have I sinned: be not thou a stranger from me, o full of heavenly grace. Be thou the keeper of my heart: sign me with the fear of God. Give me soundness of life, and decency of manners. Grant me to avoid sins, and to love that which is just.* Another, which is call'd a recommendation to

* Te deprecor—ut in sancto, tremendo, ac terribili judicio, in conspectu unigeniti filii tui, cui Pater dedit omne judicium, me liberes & protegas à pœnis inferni; & participem me facias cœlestium gaudiorum. *Hortul. anim. pag. 227.*

† Consolare peccatorem: & ne tuum des honorem alieno aut crudeli; precor te, regina cœli. Me habeto excusatum, apud Christum, tuum natum: cujus iram expavescō, & furorem perijmesco. Nam peccavi tibi soli: o Maria virgo, noli esse mihi aliena, gratia cœlesti plena. Esto custos cordis mei: signa me timore Dei: confer vitæ sanitatem; & da morum honestatem. Da peccata me vitare, & quod justum est amare. *pag. 289.*

to the blessed virgin, is as follows. O † virgin Mary, the hope of my soul, next to God: - - - - I beseech thee to keep me from sins, from scandals, from all human confusion, from the wrath of the tremendous judgment, from unclean thoughts, from all mortal sin, from sudden and unexpected death, from all dangers of soul and body, of my reputation, and my substance: nor do thou ever suffer me so to sin, as to lose thy favour. Give me amendment of what is past, security of what is present, and cautiousness about what is to come. Give me in this life a ready assistance: and do thou in the tremendous judgment speak for me to thy son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

A great part of these prayers, 'tis evident, consists of direct petitions to the virgin, for such things as both scripture and reason teach us to ask of God only: tho' other parts go no further than to declare a confidence in her mediation for obtaining benefits. And to such a monstrous height were things carried in this respect, about the time when this creed of Pius IVth was framed; that whereas these prayers had been much used, and for that purpose published in books of devotion, particularly in the *Hortulus animæ*, printed by Plantin at Antwerp, 1566, from which I have here

† *Spes animæ meæ post Deum, virgo Maria: - - - - precor te, ut serves me à peccatis, à scandalis, ab omni confusione humana, ab ira judicii tremendi, ab immundis cogitationibus, ab omni mortali peccato, à subitanea & improvisa morte, ab omnibus periculis animæ, & corporis, honoris, & rerum mearum: nec unquam me tale permittas facere peccatum, quo gratiam tuam amittam. Da mihi de præteritis emendationem, de præsentibus custodiam, de futuris cautelam. Da mihi in hac vita promptum adiutorium: esto mihi in tremendo judicio prælocutrix apud filium tuum, Dominum nostrum, Jesum Christum. Amen.* pag. 266.

here transcribed them; his successor, *Pius V.* thought fit to reform the *Office of the blessed virgin*, and, for the sake of uniformity, as he himself declares in his constitution, published in the year 1571, and prefix'd to some editions of that *Office*, to forbid the use of any other than that which he himself set forth. Yet even in this *reformed Office* the following prayers remain upon record, not very different from those already recited.

* *I beseech thee, o holy Lady Mary, mother of God, - - - consolation of the desolate, way of the wanderers, salvation of all that hope in thee, - - - fountain of mercy, fountain of salvation and of grace, fountain of piety and of joy, fountain of life and of pardon; - - - that with all the saints and elect of God thou would'st come and hasten to my help; in all my prayers and petitions, in all my straits and necessities, and in all those affairs, wherein I am to act or speak or think any thing, all the days and nights and hours and moments of my life.*

† *O my holy Lady Mary: to thee, and to thy blessed protection, and singular custody, and into the*

* Obsecro te, domina sancta Maria, mater Dei - - - consolatio desolatorum, via errantium, salus omnium in te sperantium — fons misericordiæ; fons salutis, & gratiæ; fons pietatis, & lætitiæ; fons vitæ, & veniæ: — ut cum omnibus sanctis & electis Dei venias, & festines, in auxilium & consilium meum; in omnibus orationibus & petitionibus meis; in omnibus angustiis & necessitatibus meis; & omnibus illis rebus, in quibus ego sum aliquid factururus, & locuturus, aut cogitaturus, omnibus diebus, ac noctibus, horis atque momentis vitæ meæ. *Offic. B. Mariæ Virg. Venet. 1657. 8vo. pag. 473, &c.*

† O domina mea sancta Maria: me in tuam benedictam fidem ac singularem custodiam, & in sinum misericordiæ tuæ, hodie, & quotidie, & in hora exitus mei, animam meam & corpus meum tibi commendo:

the bosom of thy mercy, I do this day, and every day, and in the hour of my departure, commend myself, my soul, and my body. All my hope, and my consolation, all my straits and miseries, my life, and the end of it, I commit to thee; that by thy most holy intercession, and by thy merits, all my works may be directed and disposed, according to thine and thy son's will. Amen.

** O Mary, mother of God, and gracious virgin, true comforter of all the desolate that cry unto thee: by that great joy, with which thou wast comforted, when thou didst know that the Lord Jesus was risen from the dead on the third day, not to suffer any more; be thou the comforter of my soul: and in the last day, when with my soul and body I shall arise, to render an account of all my actions, do thou vouchsafe to help me, with regard to him who is thy son, and the only begotten of God. By thee, o kind mother and virgin, may I be enabled to escape the sentence of perpetual damnation; and with all the elect of God happily to attain eternal joys. Amen.*

There

commendo: omnem spem meam, & consolationem meam; omnes angustias & miseras meas, vitam, & finem vitæ meæ, tibi committo: ut per tuam sanctissimam intercessionem, & per tua merita, omnia mea dirigantur & disponantur opera, secundum tuam, tuique filii voluntatem. Amen. *Offic. B. Mariæ virg. pag. 481.*

** O Maria, Dei genitrix, & virgo gratiosa; omnium desolatorum ad te clamantium consolatrix vera: per illud magnum gaudium, quo consolata es, quando cognovisti Dominum Jesum die tertia à mortuis impassibilem surrexisse; sis consolatrix animæ meæ: & apud eundem, tuum, & Dei natum unigenitum, in die novissimo, quando cum anima & corpore ero resurrecturus, & de singulis meis factis rationem redditurus, me digneris juvare. Perpetuæ damnationis sententiam per te, pia mater & virgo, valeam evadere; & cum electis Dei omnibus, ad æterna gaudia feliciter pervenire. Amen. pag. 482,*

There is * another prayer still retain'd in the same Office, address'd to the virgin jointly with the evangelist *John*, and to the same purpose with the rest, so far as the recommending to them body and soul, and beseeching them to be every hour and moment, both inwardly and outwardly, firm protectors, as well as kind intercessors with God. There remains likewise, in the same reformed Office, the lamentation of the blessed virgin: at the end of which are these words. † O virgin, let me be defended by thee in the day of judgment: grant that I may be guarded by the cross of Christ; secured by his death, and cherished by his grace: and when my body shall die, grant that the glory of paradise may be given to my soul. Amen. And every one knows, that those hymns are still retained, in which among other addressees, are these that follow. || Mary, thou mother of grace, and sweet parent of clemency; protect us from the enemy, and receive us in the hour of death. - - - † Loose the bands of the guilty; bring forth light to the blind; drive away all our evils; demand for us every blessing. - - - make us meek and chaste, deliver'd from our faults.

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* Vobis duobus ego miserrimus peccator commendo hodie corpus & animam meam: ut in omnibus horis atque momentis, interiùs & exteriùs, firmi custodes & pii apud Deum intercessores mihi existere dignemini. pag. 477, 478.

† Per te, virgo, sum defensus in die judicii: fac me cruce custodiri; morte Christi præmuniri; confoveri gratiâ: quando corpus morietur, fac ut animæ donetur paradisi gloria. Amen. pag. 480, 481.

|| Maria, mater gratiæ, dulcis parens clementiæ; tu nos ab hoste protege; & mortis horâ suscipe. Offic. B. Mariæ virg. ad primam.

† Solve vincla reis; profer lumen cæcis; mala nostra pelle; bona cuncta posce. — nos, culpis solutos, mites fac & castos. Offic. B. virg. ad vespèras.

The *Hortulus animæ*, so far as relates to some prayers therein address'd to the blessed Virgin, and others to fictitious saints, was suppress'd by the forementioned constitution of *Pius V.* But there are many of the like kind in that collection, which do not seem to be affected with this prohibition; address'd to saints, who are without all doubt acknowledged by the church of *Rome*, and prayed to in their public litanies; and containing direct petitions for spiritual and eternal benefits, as well as for intercession with God. To this purpose are those petitions to the * patriarchs and prophets in general; *pray for my sins, and expel intirely the darknes of error from my heart.* To the same purpose is that remarkable prayer to † *St. Philip.* *O holy Philip, apostle of our Lord; who didst desire of the only begotten Son of the Father, that he would shew the Father to thee and to thy associates: I miserable sinner, covered with the filth of all crimes, intreat thee, that thou wouldst deliver me from all damnation, and wrath to come; and wouldst lead me, joyful and adorned with lamps, to the kingdom of glory.* To the same purpose, and some of them rather stronger, if possible, are the prayers to ‡ *St. James,* || *St. Paul,* ** *St. Bartholomew,*
N St. Simon

* Obsecrate pro peccatis meis; expellite penitus caliginem cordis mei. *Hortul. anim. pag. 295.*

† Sancte Philippe, apostole Domini; qui ab unigenito Patris Filio eundem Patrem tibi & sociis tuis ostendi petisti: te miser ego peccator, omnium criminum sordibus obvolutus, deprecor, ut me ab omni damnatione & à ventura ira liberes, & lampadibus ornatum & lætum ad regnum gloriæ perducas. *pag. 296.*

‡ Sancte Jacobe Alphei: per gratiam, qua frater Domini vocari meruisti, te deprecor: ut me à præsentis flagello, à consuetudine peccandi,

|| *Hort. anim. pag. 298.*

** *pag. 299.*

* St. *Simon* the *Canaanite* and St. *Jude*, † St. *Andrew*, and St. *Thomas*, the ‡ rythmical prayer to all the apostles; and many others, too tedious to enumerate.

Now if you ask, what foundation there is for these things; what ground for a christian's professing as an article of his faith, *that saints are to be worshiped and prayed to, and that they offer up prayers to God for us*: it must be resolved wholly into the authority of the church, and *the commandment of men*; for the scripture teaches us quite another doctrine. The rule of the new testament is, that we worship and pray to God alone, in the name of his Son Jesus Christ. This appears by the directions given by our Lord himself to his apostles, a little before his ascension into heaven, and with a view to it, *John XVI. 23.* where the two verbs *ἐρωτάω* and *αἰτέω* seem to be used in the same sense. *In that day ye shall ask me nothing: ---- whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* And again, ver 26. *At that day ye shall ask in my name: [αἰτήσεσθε] and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.* In these passages our Lord speaks very plainly his

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candi, ab immunditia cordis & corporis, & à ventura ira liberares; & auream coronam mihi reddas, quæ variis gemmarum floribus fulgeat, ac coelesti lumine splendeat. In *English* thus. *O holy James, the son of Alphaeus: by that grace, whereby thou didst attain to become the brother of our Lord, I beseech thee to rescue me from the present scourge, from the habit of sinning, from uncleanness of heart and body, and from the wrath to come; and to grant me a golden crown, sparkling with various flowers of gems, and shining with a heavenly light.* pag. 296, 297.

* pag. 300. † p. 301. ‡ p. 303, 304.

mind, that his disciples should *pray to the Father in his name*. But tho' he encourages them to hope for his intercession with the Father; yet he is far from giving positive directions for their praying even to himself for that intercession. Much less therefore can it be his mind, that his disciples should pray to angels and departed saints, and trust to their intercession; even supposing it were certain that they see our condition, and hear the prayers offered to them: and much less still, that direct petitions should be offered to them, for deliverance from all evils, and for the happiness of eternal life. Even the making them mediators is utterly inconsistent with the plain declaration of the apostle, 1 Tim. II. 5. that *there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*; and inconsistent with those passages before cited, where Christ directed his disciples *to pray to the Father in his name*, and left no room for the name of any other mediator besides himself: much less did he leave room for offering up petitions to saints or angels, for those spiritual blessings, which God alone dispenses through the mediation of his Son. Let it therefore be ever so confidently * denied, that *by praying to saints the papists mean addressing to them as disposers of grace or glory*: yet we see it is common in the *Romish church* to pray to them directly *for purity of heart and life, for deliverance from wrath to come, and for a happy immortality*; besides the praying to obtain these blessings *through their merits and intercession*.

I have been so large upon the former part of
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* Grounds of cath. doct. pag. 42.

this article, that protestants might see, by the examples produced, what they would scarce have believed, had it been only related in a general way.

As to the latter part, *the veneration paid to the reliques* of saints: it is no wonder that the priests do all that lies in their power to encourage the people in it, because of the immense gains which themselves receive from it: an argument, which we have reason to believe is of much greater force with them, than that which the synod of *Trent* (*Seff. XXV.*) pretends to be moved by; which is, *that the bodies of the saints have been temples of the holy Ghost*. However, even this will never justify that superstitious veneration of the supposed remains of dead saints, with which the church of *Rome* abounds. The whole depends upon *the commandments of men*, instead of the authority of God. Yet for all these things the *Romanists* pretend to bring arguments from scripture.

For the veneration of reliques, they have † recourse to 2 *Kings*, XIII. 21. where we are told of a dead man raised to life by the bones of the prophet *Elisha*. But they ought to remember at the same time, that we have no account of any worship paid to these dead bones; nor any direction or encouragement for such worship, in this, or in any other text whatever. On the contrary we are assured, in the case of another extraordinary prophet, that is, *Moses*; that *God buried him* in such a manner, *that no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day*; *Deut. XXXIV. 6.* And it seems,

† *Grounds*, pag. 46.

seems, with good reason, to be generally believed, that this was on purpose to prevent that superstitious veneration, which the *Israelites* might have been in danger of shewing to his dead body. As to the * *carrying from the body of Paul handkerchiefs and aprons to the sick; and the diseases thereupon departing from them, and evil spirits going out of them*; *Acts* XIX. 12. that is likewise an instance of the wonderful power of God, and a testimony of his approving the doctrine which *Paul* preached. But the very silence concerning any veneration paid to the *handkerchiefs* and *aprons* themselves, concurs with common sense to assure us, that no *veneration* was or ought to be paid to them.

For the veneration of saints and of angels, the author of *the † Grounds* produces a number of texts, signifying that *they are honoured of God*: all which we acknowledge, as well as the papists, and yet dare not worship them. Many of the texts relate only to angels, their dignity and office of ministering: which will never prove that they should be worshiped, while God himself has given no direction or allowance for that purpose. As to *Rev.* II. 26, 27. and V. 10. they are figurative expressions, relating to the happiness and glory of some future state; but no manner of foundation for present worship to departed saints. As to the quotation from *Exod.* XXIII. 20, 21. and *Josh.* V. 14. 15. our author would do well to consider, whether they were not meant concerning the *Logos*, the Son of God. Certain it is, that the latter of them

* *Grounds*, pag. 46.

† pagg. 38, 39, 40.

them was so expounded by * *Eusebius*; and before him, by † *Justin Martyr*: and I think with great probability of truth. As for the Virgin *Mary's* saying, *Luke I. 48. From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed*: it plainly means, that all generations would pronounce her happy, and *highly favoured of God*; as the Angel in his salutation, ver. 28. declared her to be: and yet it gives her no title to religious worship. Nor will the distinction between the honour said to be given to her and other saints, and that which is given to God, excuse the papists from the charge of idolatry, any more than it would excuse the heathens: many of whom plainly shewed, that they acknowledged one supreme deity, at the same time that they paid religious worship to their dead heroes.

But it is ‡ alledged, that the 'saints and angels pray for us.' And in proof of this we are refer'd to the angel's prayer for *Jerusalem*, *Zeck. I. 12.* In answer to which it is sufficient to say; that this prayer was delivered in company and conversation with the prophet; and that the prophet did not pray to him to offer up that prayer. It is likewise alledged, from *Rev. V. 8. and VIII. 4.* that *the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials, full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints*: and that *the smoak of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the Angel's band.* Now, with regard to both these, it is sufficient
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* Hist. eccles. lib. I. cap. 2. † Dial. cum. Tryph. edit. Paris, 1615. pag. 286, ‡ Grounds, pag. 40.

to say; that passages of such a mystical nature ought never to be brought for vindication of a practice, which is contrary to the tenor of plain scripture. Particularly with regard to the latter, it appears probable from ver. 3. immediately preceding, that the angel spoken of was the Son of God himself, *the one and only mediator between God and men*. And with regard to the former passage: the *four living creatures and twenty-four elders* seem designed to represent all the saints in general, offering up their own prayers and thanksgivings; not the saints in heaven praying for the saints on earth.

The argument taken from the * care and concern of the saints above for their brethren upon earth, and from the continuance of their charity, gives no more reason for our praying to them to pray for us, than it would for a man in the most southern part of *England* to call out to a pious and loving friend in the north of *Scotland*, to pray for him. As for *the rich glutton in hell, his petitioning in favour of his five brethren upon earth*: that is manifestly no more than a figure of speech, suited to the parable, of which it is a part; and designed by our Saviour to introduce the observation, that no endeavours of others can do us good, if we do not take care of our selves, in attending to that dispensation by which we shall hereafter be judged. The prayer of *the souls of the martyrs*, for justice against their persecutors, is alike figurative; and taken from a book, which is figurative almost throughout: nor can it be designed for any thing more, than
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* Grounds, pag. 41.

to signify, that divine justice will certainly overtake cruel persecutors, such as are the leading men of the church of *Rome*; concerning whom in particular it seems intended. And as to the words of our Lord, *Luke XVI. 9.* they are plainly meant in general concerning the future rewards of benevolence: and the expression, [*that they may receive you into everlasting habitations*] signifies no more, accordingly to the well known phraseology of the eastern countries, than [*that ye may be received*] or, [*ye shall be received*] into everlasting habitations: nor does it contain any intimations of being helped to heaven by those who get there before us.

The texts produced, pag. 42. in behalf of the *invocation of saints*, are all quoted to no purpose; because there is in no part of scripture any direction to pray to the saints in heaven for their intercession, tho' there are many directions to christians to intercede for one another here upon earth. And the difference of the circumstances cuts off any pretence of arguing from the one to the other. Mutual intercession for each other here below is a spur to mutual beneficence; and answers other good purposes, which are not likely to be answered between persons who have no opportunity of conversing together, or knowing one another's minds: besides that in many scripture instances there are plain directions from God, for men to desire their brethren here below to pray for them; but nothing like it with regard to saints in heaven. And farther, by reason of the difference of circumstances, there is no praying to them from earth to heaven, without making them

them mediators, to the disparagement of *the one only mediator, Jesus Christ*: of which there is no danger in desiring the prayers of any particular person or congregation here upon earth. And, whatever was the *design* of the *Romish* doctrine of the invocation of saints; it is evident *in fact*, that the common people in that church do, in pursuance of it, apply to the mediation of the saints much more than to that of Jesus Christ; and entertain false and pernicious sentiments of the divine being, as almost inaccessible and inexorable, or at least as wanting continual solicitations from all the saints about his throne, to be kind to their brethren upon earth. Moreover it takes for granted a ridiculous round of prayers, and of informations relating to those prayers; all inconsistent with the tenor of scripture doctrine; and all upon the supposition, that they have knowledge of our addresses, which we have no manner of reason to believe they have.

For, what if *there is * joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth?* *Luke XV. 10.* If these and the like expressions were not designed to be figurative and hyperbolic, it is easy to answer; that the angels have their knowledge, and consequently the occasion of their joy, by immediate revelation from God. And the same is true concerning those two passages in the *Revelation*; *XI. 15. XIX. 1, 2.* What if at the resurrection the saints shall be *equal to the angels*; *Luke XX. 36.* or *like unto the angels*? Forbear worshiping them till that time: and you will then clearly see, that neither

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* Grounds, pag. 44.

the one nor the other are to be worshiped. And so indeed you may now, if you will but take the scripture for your guide: which particularly warns you, to *let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels*; Col. II. 18. Surely then he must be much more a volunteer in worship, who will offer that to saints, which is forbidden to be offered to angels.

But how indeed should either saints or angels know what passes here upon earth, without immediate revelation from God? How can they be sensible of the several addresses made to them in heaven, by their worshipers in all parts of the christian world; unless you will acknowledge they are themselves possessed of divine perfections, such as omnipresence, omniscience, and searching of the heart? And how will that consist with the honour which is due to God alone? This one thought is a sufficient answer to all the * reasonings drawn from *the light of glory*, enjoy'd by the saints and angels in heaven; and all the reflexions upon any texts of scripture relating to it.

As for the example of *Jacob*, Gen. XLVIII. 15, 16. the very recital of the words, I think, plainly shews it was the Son of God himself, and not an ordinary angel, who is there spoken of. *God, before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk; the God, who fed me all my life long unto this day; the angel, who redeemed me from all evil, blest the lads.* And the same appears to have been *the angel*, to whom *Jacob wept and made supplication*; Hosea XII. 4.

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* Grounds, pagg. 44, 45.

As for the benediction, *Rev. I. 4.* in the name of *the seven spirits before the throne* : I cannot see that it includes any more, than that they were to be the ministers of that *grace and peace*, which proceed originally from God ; or that it can be any foundation of invoking them with religious worship.

But how will the *Romanists* account for that remarkable example on the other side of the question ; that of the apostle *John* ? who, when through the excessive glory of the vision he had received, he *fell down at the feet of the angel* from whom he received it, met with this reproof from him : *See thou do it not : I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus : worship God.* The apostle is here told by an angel, that he must *worship God*, in opposition to the thought of *worshipping angels* : and the reason for it is, because angels are only *fellow-servants with those who have the testimony of Jesus*. This single text, one would think, should be sufficient, with those who have any regard to scripture, to overthrow the worship of angels and saints. But notwithstanding all that can be said against this practice, the church of *Rome* is resolved to retain it : and in order thereto has set up her own authority against the authority of God.

The same is to be said concerning the next article.

IX. *I do most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, and of the mother of God, always a virgin, and also of other saints, ought to be had and retained: and that due honour and veneration ought to be given to them.*

But what is this *due veneration*? If it is to be understood by the constant practice of the *Romish* church, (notwithstanding all their pretences of a desire to * remove superstition, and notwithstanding the subterfuge of a *relative honour*, and the laboured distinction between λατρεία and δαδεία) it is a direct and positive *worship* of the images themselves. And what if the worshiper does not expressly say to the image itself, *I worship thee*: yet if he is directed to pray to it, to profess his hope and trust in it, and all this is to be attended with the solemnity of bowing to it, lighting candles, and burning incense before it; what difference is the common people likely to make in their minds between this and real *worship*? And yet all this worship is, by the direction of the *Romish* church, paid to

* Concil. Trident. Sess. XXV.

to a *crucifix*, in the following words of their Breviary, appointed to be used on the evening before passion Sunday: † *Hail o cross, my only hope: do thou, in this passion-season, increase grace to the pious, and blot out the crimes of the guilty.*

This is a stated public act of devotion in the church of *Rome*. And therefore it is surprizing, that the author of *the Grounds* should absolutely * deny ‘ that the papists pray to images; and ‘ that he should appeal to common sense, and ‘ to the *Doway* catechism, as teaching them, ‘ that *images can neither see nor hear, nor help us.*’ Hence it appears however, that to serve the interests of mother church, papists can allow themselves to practise, publicly and statedly, what they acknowledge to be contrary to their own approv’d religious instructions, and to common sense. He tells us, in the same page, that ‘ papists are not ‘ taught to put trust and confidence in images, ‘ as the heathens did in their idols; but are expressly taught the contrary by the council of ‘ *Trent.*’ And it is certain, that the ‡ council of *Trent*, in the XXVth. session, whatever their design was, does speak to this purpose. But why then is this public act of worship continued? Why is every worshiper still directed and obliged to

† O crux, ave, spes unica: hoc passionis tempore, piis adauge gratiam, reisque dele crimina.

* pag. 47.

‡ Non quod fiducia in imaginibus sit figenda, veluti olim fiebat à gentibus, quæ in idolis spem suam collocabant. *Concil. Trid. Sess. XXV. de venerat. sanctor. & imag.*

to say, *hail, o cross, my only hope*; and expressly to pray to it for grace and pardon? *Thomas Aquinas* acted a much more honourable part, than either this author or the council itself, when, discoursing on this very subject, he said: ‡ ‘We yield the worship of *latria*, [that is, we yield divine worship] to that, in which we place the hope of salvation. But we place the hope of salvation in the cross of Christ. For the church sings, *hail, o cross, our only hope: do thou, in this passion-season, increase righteousness to the pious, and grant pardon to the guilty.* Therefore the cross of Christ is to be adored with the adoration of *latria*.’ ----- And again: ‘It is adored with the same adoration as Christ himself; that is, with the adoration of *latria*. And for this reason we speak to the cross, and pray to it, as to him who was crucified.’

As to the *images of the virgin Mary and other saints*; it is notorious, that there is in the church of *Rome* such a veneration paid to them, as the scripture no where allows to the persons themselves whom they represent. It is no wonder therefore, that in that church images of God the Father and

‡ Illi exhibemus latriæ cultum, in quo ponimus spem salutis: sed in cruce Christi ponimus spem salutis: cantat enim ecclesia; *O crux, ave, spes unica: hoc passionis tempore, auge piis justitiam, reisque dona veniam.* Ergo crux Christi adoranda est adoratione latriæ. *Aquin. sum. part. III. qu. 25. art. 4.*

Adoratur eadem adoratione cum Christo, sc. adoratione latriæ: & propter hoc etiam crucem alloquimur & deprecamur, quasi ipsum crucifixum. *Ibid.*

and of the blessed Trinity should be allowed; and that the author, I have so often referred to, shou'd think himself obliged to palliate these things, at the same time that he observes * ' their profession ' of faith makes no mention of such images.' But his argument from the title of *the Ancient of days*, ascribed to the Most High, *Dan. VII. 9.* will never justify the painting God the Father under the figure of an old man: especially after that express charge of *Moses* to the *Israelites*, *Deut. IV. 15, 16.* *Take ye therefore good heed to yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female.* And as for painting the Holy Ghost under the similitude of a dove: there is no foundation for that in the text cited to support it. For *St. Matthew, III. 16.* says only, that at the baptism of Christ *the holy Ghost descended like a dove, and lighted on him*; that is, descended as a dove descends: whence it is probable, that a bright luminous appearance descended and hovered over our Saviour's head: but nothing more can be certainly concluded from the words.

I shall conclude my remarks on this article with quoting the curses of the second council of *Nice* against those who disapprove the subject of it. Besides their † repeated exclamations; *we receive*

* Grounds, pag. 49.

† Ἡ ἀγία συνόδος ἐξέδωκεν ——— ἡμεῖς τὰς σαρμάδας εἰκόνας ἀπαζήμιτα [pag. 592. ἀποδεχόμεθα] ἡμεῖς πρὸς μὴ ἕως

receive and salute the venerable images; we subject to a curse those who are otherwise minded; a curse to those, who take the sayings of holy scripture against idols, as spoken of the venerable images; a curse to those who do not salute the holy and venerable images; a curse to those who call the sacred images idols: besides these exclamations, I say, the † address of the council, with the patriarch Tarasius at their head, to the emperor Constantine and his mother Irene, very fully expresses their sense, in the following words. 'Tis manifest; that it is confessedly and without doubt acceptable and well pleasing to God, to adore and salute the imaged representations of the æconomy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the undefiled*

ἔχοντες ἀναδέμαπ καὶ τυπεῖν ἄλλοις τοῖς ἐκλαμάνουσι τὰς εἰκόνας τὰς ἁγίας γραφῆς ῥήσεις τὰς χεῖρας τῶν εἰδωλῶν, εἰς τὰς σεπτάς εἰκόνας, ἀναδέμα· τίς μὴ ἀσπαζομένους τὰς ἀγίας καὶ σεπτάς εἰκόνας, ἀναδέμα· τίς ἀποκαλεῖται τὰς ἱερὰς εἰκόνας εἰδωλα, ἀναδέμα. Concil. Nicæn. II. apud Labbé, tom. VII. pag. 576, 592.

† Ὁμολογούμενός καὶ ἀναμφισβητήτως ἀποδεκτὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον ἡμῶν [πρόκλητον] ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὰς εἰκονικὰς ἀνατυπώσεις τῆς τοῦ οἰκονομίας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων διδοῦναι καὶ αἰεὶ παρδίνου Μαρίας, καὶ τῶν πμίων ἀγγέλων, καὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων, προσκυνεῖν καὶ ἀσπάζεσθαι. Καὶ οἱ πῶς μὴ ἔτι καὶ ἀμφισβητεῖν καὶ νοσεῖν οὐδὲ τῶν σεπτῶν εἰκόνων προσκυνήσιν· οὐκ ἔστιν ἀναδεματίζειν ἡ ἀγία καὶ οἰκουμένη ἡμῶν σωσθῆναι. pag. 584.

* *The æconomy of our Lord Jesus Christ.* This phrase is explain'd in the confession of *Basil*, bishop of *Ancyra*, presented to this same synod, as signifying the manhood of our blessed Saviour; *that dispensation of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby for our salvation he became man.* Ibid. pag. 57.

defiled mother of God, and ever-virgin Mary, of the honourable angels, and of all the saints. And if any man does not hold this, but doubts and sickens concerning the adoration of the venerable images: him our holy and oecumenical synod anathematizes. The council here is very positive, that the practice spoken of is *confessedly and without all doubt well pleasing to God*; though throughout the whole series of their acts it appears, that there were many who believed it highly *displeasing* to him; which was indeed the occasion of their often repeated curses. But if they themselves were ever so well satisfied in worshipping images: yet methinks it was unmerciful to put all those under a solemn curse, who should ever have a *doubt* or *qualm* in their mind about it; especially since they tell us almost in the same breath, in which they pronounce the curse, that † *Anathema is no other than a separation from God.* But thus *the holy synod* has decreed.

In the tenth article, the believer of pope *Pius's* Creed is taught to say:

X. *I do also affirm, that the power of Indulgences was by Christ left in the Church; and that the use of them is very salutary to the christian people.*

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Now

† Τὸ ἀνάθεμα ἐστὶν ἡμεῖς ἐξορίσας ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ. pag. 584.

Now concerning this article it may very safely be affirm'd, that it is much more beneficial to the priest, than to the people. To the priest indulgences are of great advantage, in this respect, that they bring him in much riches. But to the people they are evidently hurtful, both in the concerns of this world, and of that which is to come. With their worldly substance they pay dear for that, which has an evident tendency to the ruin of their souls. For, what other tendency can there be in a man's believing, that for money he can purchase a pardon, not only for sins past, but for such as he shall commit in time to come; whatever his own wicked heart is inclined to commit, or whatever he may be drawn into, by venturing in the way of the most dangerous temptations? What man especially, who has plenty of this world's good, will ever lay that restraint upon his affections, in which the very essence of religion and virtue consists; what regard can be had to the declarations of God's displeasure against sinners, and his resolution to punish them with a final separation from his favour; if men can be brought to believe, that he has put it in the power of their fellow-creatures to absolve them beforehand, or to enable them to absolve themselves? And what gave them the confidence to affirm, that *Christ left this power of indulgences in the church?* A power he has certainly left, of declaring the forgiveness of the truly penitent. But if he has left the real power of forgiving sins, to priest, or pope, or to any man,

or

or body of men in the world, to be disposed of at their will and pleasure; he has thereby put it out of his own hands, and even out of the hands of the Father too. And if any man can by the authority of the church be persuaded to interpret scripture in this sense; I shall never wonder at any absurdities or immoralities he may be guilty of.

The papists indeed, when they think it may serve their turn, particularly when they are endeavouring to make converts among protestants, 'deny that they mean by indulgences a leave to commit sin, or pardon for sins to come.' And this is particularly denied by the author of *the Grounds of catholic doctrine*, pag. 49. But to what purpose is it to deny these things? What if this *leave to commit sin, or pardon for sins to come*, is not expressly set down in the words of the Indulgence itself? Yet if provision be made, whereby a man may, for a certain sum, secure an indulgence for any sin he shall commit; does it not come to much the same thing? The council of *Trent* acknowledges, * *that Christ has left to the church the power of bestowing indulgences*: and 'tis well known, that the popes, from age to age, take into their own hands the exercise of this power. And according to this constitution of things it follows, as † *Thomas Aquinas* honestly owns; that 'tho' the man who takes out an in-

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'duldence

* Sess. XXV. continuat. die 4. Decemb.

† Dicendum, quòd ille qui indulgentias suscipit, non absolvitur simpliciter loquendo, à debito poenæ; sed datur sibi unde debitum solvat, Aquin. *sum. suppl. tertiæ partis, qu. XXV. art. . .*

‘dulgence is not strictly speaking thereby absolved from the debt of punishment; yet there is that given to him, whereby he may absolve himself.’ And the same author assures you; * that ‘indulgences are sometimes so given, that he who assists in erecting a fabric, shall have the third part of his sins remitted: sometimes so, that he who goes to a certain church, shall have seven years of pardon: and that if in any church there is a perpetual indulgence, as, in St. Peter’s church, an indulgence of 40 days; then, so often as any one goes there, so often he obtains the indulgence.’ Now is not this in effect *a leave to commit sin*, or *a pardon beforehand*; when a man knows he has nothing else to do, but to get within reach of such a church, when he wou’d commit his intended villany; or, as soon as it is over, go and purchase *a seven years pardon*, or *a pardon for the third part of all his past sins*? But still, this was doing business only by piece-meal. And therefore the popes thought fit to grant *plenary indulgences for all sins*; and that upon a great variety of occasions, suited to the various tastes and circumstances of the people. Out of a considerable number of instances cited by a † *Romish* author, I shall only mention a few.

* Aliquando datur indulgentia, quòd qui dat auxilium ad aliquam fabricam erigendam, tertiam partem remissionis peccatorum consequatur. — Quandoque datur hoc modo indulgentia, quòd qui vadit ad aliquam ecclesiam, septem annos remissionis consequatur. *Ibid. art. 2.* — Si in aliqua ecclesia fit indulgentia perennis, sicut in ecclesia B. Petri, 40 dierum; tunc quoties aliquis vadit, toties indulgentiam consequitur. *Ibid. conclus. ad quartum.*

† Plenaria indulgentia datur solum à summis pontificibus: quòd fit diversimodè. Aliquando enim datur utiliter omnibus certum lo-

cum

few. ‘ Sometimes a plenary indulgence is given
 profitably to all who shall visit a certain place ;
 and given simply, that is, for all time ; as it
 is commonly said concerning the visiters of our
 Lord’s sepulchre. - - - Sometimes it is given to
 all who visit a certain place on a certain day
 within the year : as it is granted to the church
 of *St. Mary*. - - - Sometimes it is granted to all
 who shall perform a certain work : *e. g.* such
 as shall take the cross, and go to war against
 the infidels ; whether they go in person, or send
 warriors, or give a certain sum of money, by
 way of alms, for such a work, *or for some other*
pious business. A famous example of plenary
 indulgence may be seen in the † Canon Law,
 granted by pope *Boniface VIII.* to all such as
 shou’d, in the first year of each century, visit
 the churches of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*. The
 words are : *We shall and do grant, not only*
full and larger, but the fullest pardon of all sins.
 Which is confirm’d in the next chapter by *Cle-*
ment VI. who reduces the jubilee to every fiftieth
 year ; and includes the church of *Lateran*. His
 words are : *Decreeing - - - that they who shall,*
for

cum visitantibus ; simpliciter, i. e. pro omni tempore : sicut com-
munitur dicitur de visitantibus sepulchrum Domini. — Aliquando
datur indulgentia plenaria omnibus visitantibus certum locum certa
die infra annum ; ut concessum est ecclesiæ S. Mariæ. — Tertio
modo datur indulgentia plenaria omnibus facientibus certum opus :
puta assumentibus crucem ad bellandum contra infideles ; vel eunti-
bus, vel mittentibus bellatores contra illos ; vel dantibus certam
summam pecuniæ elemosynaliter pro tali opere, vel alio pio negotio.
Antonin. Repertor. part. I. tit. 10. sect. 4.

† Non solum plenam & largiorem, imò plenissimam omnium
 suorum concedemus, & concedimus, veniam peccatorum. *Lib. V.*
extrav. commun. tit. 9. cap. 1.

for devotion's sake, visit these churches, shall obtain the fullest pardon of all their sins.

It is surprizing, that a mortal man shou'd ever dare to *decree* in this manner : or to say, as *Boniface* does, *We grant the fullest pardon of all sins.* But, from one degree to another, this matter was at length carried to such an extravagant height, that it is no great wonder, that the doctrine of indulgences shou'd, under the hand of God, prove the immediate occasion of the Reformation. If the council of *Trent*, by reason of the scandal which this doctrine brought upon their church, did * ordain, ' that abuses shou'd be ' corrected, and evil lucre abolished ; ' it has still for want of being particular enough, left room for the return of most, if not all, the abuses and scandals which this doctrine ever introduced.

And even the author of *the Grounds of catholic doctrine*, when he quotes scripture, to prove that Christ has left the power of indulgences in the church, does it in such a manner, as if he wou'd have us expect from them the real pardon of sin ; tho' he had before † told us, that by indulgences he meant no more, than ' a releasing of ' the debt of temporal punishment.' He ‡ produces in particular the words of Christ to *Peter*, *Mat. XVI. 19.* (the same text which he had || before quoted to prove, ' that such sins as exclude ' from the kingdom of heaven cannot be remitted ' independently of the keys of the church') *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven :*
and

* Sess. XXV. Decemb. 4. decr. de indulg.

† pag. 49.

‡ pag. 50.

|| pag. 22.

and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. But it is evident, in the first place, that this power, whatever it was, was not in these words given to the church, but to *Peter*. It is further evident, from the context, wherein *Peter* had confess'd *that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God*, and Christ had assured him *that upon that rock he would build his church*; it is evident, I say, from this context, that the power of *binding and loosing* related to the awful effects of his preaching Christ's doctrine, by the immediate direction and assistance of the holy Ghost. And the same power, described in the like figurative manner, Christ gave to all the rest of the apostles, *Joh. XX. 22, 23.* when he breathed on them, and said, *Receive ye the holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.* That this is the true meaning of the words in *St. Matthew*, appears by the promise in the beginning of the verse; *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*; which was made good in *Peter's* having the honour to open the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, by being the first person who preached the gospel after Christ's resurrection. There is therefore nothing of popish indulgences in the case; nothing relating to the power of releasing the debt of temporal punishment: much less is there any thing like the real power of forgiving such sins as exclude from the kingdom of heaven; otherwise than as *Peter* was empowered and directed to preach that gospel, which should have this happy effect on those who embraced it.

As to the words of *St. Paul, 2 Cor. II. 10.* make only the necessary allowances for the extraordinary

case.

case of apostolical power, to which they plainly relate; and consider the *Corinthians* as having been directed by an inspir'd apostle to pronounce a sentence, which visibly produced extraordinary effects: and you will then find it a hard matter to prove, that the text ascribes any more power to the church itself, than that of shewing, that the offence which they had justly conceived against a notorious sinner was removed from their minds, by his giving proofs of a sincere repentance. 'Tis certain however, that the *forgiveness* here spoken of will do no service to the church of *Rome* in her doctrine of indulgences, till that church can prove she has the same power, by which the apostle acted. For the right understanding of this text, 'tis necessary to go back to the former epistle to the *Corinthians*. Where we find: that a certain person in the church of *Corinth* had been guilty of a very foul and grievous crime: that this had been too much connived at: and that the apostle thought fit hereupon to exercise that extraordinary power, which by the immediate gift of the holy Ghost was conferred upon him, of solemnly *delivering the man unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that his soul might be saved in the day of the Lord*; that is, of inflicting some dreadful judgment or calamity upon his body, that by reflecting upon this immediate and visible hand of God he might be brought to a better mind, as by the event it appears he was. Read only the apostle's words to the church of *Corinth*, (for it was upon their pronouncing the judgment, that it was to take effect) and you will plainly see that this was the case. 1 Cor. V. 3, 4, 5. *I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him who hath so done this deed:*

deed: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ; to deliver such a one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. The apostle cannot here be understood merely as agreeing and concurring with the *Corinthian church*, in a censure to be passed upon an offender. His words include abundantly more. Besides the solemn mention of *the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*; here is the mention of *the Spirit*, that extraordinary Spirit, with which the apostle was endued, and of *the power of our Lord Jesus Christ*, as present with the church, in denouncing the judgment; all this, for *delivering over the offender unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh*. 'Tis to the like purpose, that the same apostle says concerning *Hymenaeus and Alexander*, 1 Tim. I. 20. that *he had delivered them unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme*. Which words cannot be understood of a church's censure; for the apostle speaks of the thing as his own act: nor do they include the judging of the offenders to future misery; but to some present suffering, *to teach them not to blaspheme*, that they might avoid future misery. It plainly appears therefore to be meant of some extraordinary judgment from heaven, inflicted on their bodies, for the awakening of their minds. The same power the apostle exercised, when he struck *Elymas the sorcerer* with sudden blindness, for endeavouring to pervert the deputy from the faith, Acts XIII. 6----12. And what was the inflicting of sudden death upon *Ananias and Sapphira*, but an exercise of the same power, in the highest degree? All this,

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which

which was the extraordinary gift of God, conferred on the apostles, for confirming the authority of the doctrine they taught, was agreeable to a received opinion of the *Jews*, that distempers, as well as other calamities, had the nature of divine judgments: which was the reason of the disciples asking Christ, concerning the man born blind, whether *the sin* was in the man himself, or in his parents; *John IX. 2.*

Now it appears, from the case before us, as well as from the many beneficial miracles which the apostles wrought; that as they had a power to inflict judgments, so they had likewise a power to release from them. And as they were, under the hand of God, the immediate *punishers* of sin, in the judgments which they *inflicted*; so when, by the extraordinary power communicated to them, they *released* from those judgments, they were as properly, in the same respect, said to *forgive*. It does not appear, that the same power was communicated to the * churches, even in the most early days: particularly it does not appear that the church of *Corinth* itself was possessed of any such power; though it is certain it abounded, as other churches then did, with extraordinary gifts. The power was left immediately in the hands of the apostles. Yet it was wisely ordered, that the bodily punishment shou'd overtake the incestuous person upon the church's pronouncing that judgment, to which an inspir'd apostle had directed them; and that upon their *forgiving* him, in obedience to the apostle's direction, when he came to be satisfied of his sincere repentance, he should be *released* from the bodily punishment.

Let

* Having altered my mind in this point since the first publishing of this essay; I am not ashamed to own the alteration.

Let any man judge, from the apostle's own words, whether this is not his meaning. 2 Cor. II. 6---9. *Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you, that ye would confirm your love towards him. For to this end also did I write; that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.* Then follow the words of the controverted text, ver. 10. *To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing; to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it, in the person of Christ.* From which words, and particularly from the apostle's saying, that *he forgave in the person of Christ*, I think it evident; that the instances of *forgiving*, to which he refers, were *releases* from immediate and visible judgments of God, inflicted by that extraordinary power, which was communicated to the apostles. When the church of *Rome* can thus, by the meer force of her censures, bring down immediate judgments from heaven upon the persons censured, and when we see this by the effects themselves; it will be time enough for us to believe, that she can *forgive*, in the sense of this text; that is, *release* the true penitent from that distemper, or other calamity, which her censure brought upon him. But, as in other cases, so in this: that church vainly pretends to have, as a standing power remaining in her, what was the extraordinary gift of the holy Ghost to the apostles. And because the Almighty does not concur with her censures, by inflicting immediate judgments from heaven, she will do

moreover; what is in those two articles said in a general way, concerning *the catholic and apostolic church*, is here expressly confined to the church of *Rome*; that its disciples may be taught to believe, the church of *Rome* is *the catholic church*, and the only true church of Jesus Christ.

But how absurd is this assertion, as well as false in fact? The church of *Rome* is a particular church, professing the christian doctrine, tho' in a very corrupt and erroneous manner. Now, to believe that this, or any other particular church, in *Italy*, or *France*, or *Spain*, or *England*, or any where else, is the *catholic*, *i. e.* the universal church; is to believe that a part is the whole: and to talk of *the catholic church of Rome*, is just as good sense, as to talk of *a general special*, or *a universal particular*.

And as to the falsity of the *Roman* church being *the mother of all churches*; that is very plain from the history of the new testament. Which assures us, that the first church was gathered in *Jerusalem*; many circumstances concurring to order it so: particularly, our Lord's trial and crucifixion there, after he had employed in that place a considerable part of his ministry; his resurrection from the dead; and the descent of the holy Ghost upon his apostles. All these circumstances, together with Christ's own command to his apostles, to begin their preaching at *Jerusalem*, *Luke XXIV.* concurred to make *Jerusalem* the place, where the first church should be gathered. And besides the church of *Jerusalem*, many churches were gathered in other places,

places, before there was any church at *Rome* : so far is that from being *the mother-church*.

Then, as to *authority* : the new testament knows no such thing, as the making any one church *sovereign* or *mistress* over others. If any one could claim the sovereignty, it must be that which was first gathered in *Jerusalem*, by the ministry of the apostles : because it was from that body of christians that the christian doctrine was spread, into all those places which afterwards received it. But there is no footstep of any *authority* or *power*, claimed by that or by any church in the new testament, over any other whatever : nor any foundation for this pretended authority of the church of *Rome* over other churches, but what arises from a wrong interpretation of the words of our Saviour to the apostle *Peter* ; who is supposed to have been afterwards bishop of *Rome*, tho' it is still a doubt, whether he ever was there. Upon *Peter's* confessing *Christ to be the Son of the living God*, Christ gave a strong testimony of his approving that confession, by alluding to his name, which signifies *a rock*, and saying to him : *thou art Peter ; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it : and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Mat. XVI. 16---- 19.*

The rock, upon which Christ built his church, was not the firmness of *Peter* himself, who after this most shamefully denied his master with oaths and curses ; but the goodness of his confession : agreeably

greeably to which we find, in the following history of the new testament, that the acknowledging *Jesus to be the Son of God*, was looked on as receiving the whole christian doctrine; this being the firm foundation, upon which the whole superstructure was built. As to *Christ's giving unto Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven*; that receives a clear explication from his being, by the providence of God, made the instrument of opening the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven; in being the first preacher of the gospel, both to *Jews and Gentiles*, after the resurrection and ascension of Christ, whereby his kingdom was established. This is the plain and evident meaning of *Christ's giving to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven*. The giving him thereby the power, of *letting in or shutting out* from the happiness of that kingdom whomsoever he pleased, is too absurd a thought to deserve a mention; as it is absolutely inconsistent with the wisdom of divine government. Besides, if any such meaning as this could be gathered from the following words, *whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*: the same extent of power was undoubtedly given by our Lord to all the apostles, a little before his ascension, and consequently not confined to *Peter*: *John XX. 23. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained*. Yet there is no semblance of an argument, from these or any other words of our Lord, that his apostles, or any other men upon earth, should have power, at their will

will and pleasure, to determine whose sins should be forgiven, and whose not forgiven ; who should be admitted into the state of future happiness, and who excluded. No: they can with no colour of reason be understood to mean any thing like this. They signify indeed, that the apostles, faithfully preaching the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, under the infallible guidance and direction of the holy Ghost, should by the tenour of that preaching fully make known, who were the persons that should be saved, and who condemned : and that they had authority to assure those who should embrace the christian doctrine, and conform their lives to it, that they should inherit eternal life ; and that those who should maliciously reject it, or contradict their profession of it by a wicked course of action, should be finally miserable. This is that power of *binding and loosing*, which was committed to *Peter*, and of *remitting and retaining sins*, committed to him and his brethren together.

And now what becomes of *Peter's* pretended character, as *prince of the apostles and vicar of Jesus Christ*? How visible indeed is it, that Christ was determined to have no *vicar* upon earth ; no one of his apostles *prince* over the rest ; no *head of the church* besides himself? What else could he mean in those words, *Mat. XXIII. 8. Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.* What could he mean by those words, *Luke XXII. 25, 26.* occasioned by a strife among the apostles, *which should be the greatest* ; which was a proper season for deciding whether any, and which in par-

ticular, should have superiority over the rest? *He said unto them: the kings of the gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he who is greatest among you, (that is, most deservedly in esteem) let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.* These, and other like things, were said to *Peter*, as well as to the rest of the apostles. And throughout the whole new testament there is no footstep or appearance, of his ever having looked on himself, or his being acknowledged by his brethren, to have a superiority over them.

The papists indeed eagerly catch at any thing, that may seem to countenance this superiority. But in their eagerness they are sometimes so unhappy, as to lay hold on texts, which make directly against them; which call to mind *Peter's* failings, and give him advice suitable to the remembrance of them. Such are two of the texts quoted by the author of * *the Grounds*. The one of which gives him warning beforehand of the great fall, which would be occasioned by his high conceit of his own strength; and exhorts him, whenever he should be recovered, to do what he could to prevent the fall of others: *Luke XXII. 32. When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* This is very far from 'committing' unto *Peter* the care of his brethren the apostles, any otherwise than letting him know, that it would be his duty to remove, as far as he should be able, the stumbling-block which his fall would lay in their way: and instead of a com-
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mission conveying authority, it is indeed an advice and exhortation, arising from the view of his own failings. The other text, *John XXI. 15, 16, 17.* directly points at *Peter's* shameful fall, after it was over, and at that presumption which was the occasion of it; exhorting him to take care for the future, rather to attend to his own duty in *feeding the flock of Christ*, than to boast as if he loved his master more than any of his brethren did. This was a manifest rebuke to his rashness, in having promised, that *tho' all should forsake Christ, yet would not he*: and the rebuke was the more visible, in thrice repeating the question, *Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me*; and once putting it thus, *lovest thou me more than these*. And *Peter* himself was sensible of it, in only answering, *Lord thou knowest I love thee*; without venturing to intimate, as before, that he herein exceeded his brethren. And as to the exhortation, *to feed Christ's sheep and lambs*: that was evidently a duty common to all the apostles: and tho' now most properly, and with inimitable force, recommended to *Peter* in particular, yet was so far from being confined to him, that *Peter* himself afterwards exhorted *the elders*, or *presbyters*, among those to whom he directed his first epistle, to perform the very same duty; *1 Pet. V. 1, 2.* What semblance now of a superiority in *Peter* is there to be fetched from these texts? And how does *St. Paul's withstanding him to the face at Antioch* consist, either with his superiority, or his infallibility?

And even, if *Peter* had been infallible, and had been constituted supreme over his brethren; which,

'tis plain, he was not : yet how would that prove, that the church of *Rome* is *the mother and mistress of all churches* ; and that the pope of *Rome* is *bishop of bishops*, and *prince of all pastors* ; and that *obedience* is to be promised and sworn to the bishop of *Rome*, as *vicar of Jesus Christ* ? How endless is the number of suppositions, vain and false suppositions, upon which such a doctrine must be built ? Especially how shall the unlearned christian, who is forbidden to read the scriptures, and has no acquaintance with ecclesiastical history ; how shall he arrive at such a knowledge, as shall enable him with a good conscience to make such a promise as is required in this article ? Yet this, as well as all the rest, is made *necessary to salvation* ! So says the conclusion of this creed, in the words of pope *Pius V.* And to the same purpose says * the Canon-Law, in the words of *Boniface VIII.* *Moreover we declare, and say, and define, and pronounce to every human creature ; that it is altogether necessary to salvation, to be subject to the Roman pontif.* But indeed it is no wonder, that subjection to the popes should be made *necessary to salvation*, when we consider the titles and powers they claim to themselves. Thus pope † *Nicholas* says : *It appears evidently enough, that the pontif can neither at all be bound or loosed by the secular power ; whom 'tis certain*

* Porro, subesse Romano pontifici, omni humanæ creaturæ declaramus, dicimus, definimus & pronunciamus, omnino esse de necessitate salutis. *Extrav. commun. de majorit. & obed. lib. I. tit. 8. cap. 1.*

† Satis evidenter ostenditur, à seculari potestate nec ligari prorsus, nec solvi posse pontificem ; quem constat à pio principe *Constantino* Deum appellatum ; nec posse Deum ab hominibus judicari manifestum est. *Decret. part. I. distinct. 96. c. 7.*

certain Constantine, that pious prince, called God: and 'tis manifest that God cannot be judged by men. Nor is it any wonder, that from this pretended fullness of power they undertake to dethrone princes, and to absolve their subjects from all obligations of fidelity and obedience. But whatever extravagant power they may blasphemously assume to themselves; our business is to take care, above all things, that we obey God: and this in many cases it will be impossible to do, without disobeying them.

The last article is conceived in the following words.

XII. I do without doubting receive and profess all other things which have been delivered, defined and declared by the sacred canons and œcumenical councils, and especially by the holy synod of Trent: and all things contrary thereunto, and all heresies condemned, rejected and anathematized by the church, I do likewise condemn, reject and anathematize.

This is very fit to be the concluding article of the overbearing and persecuting church of Rome. The private unlearned christian must, at the peril of his salvation, *without any doubting, receive and profess* (what he never had nor can ever expect

pect to have the opportunity of knowing) *all things which have been delivered, defined and declared by the sacred canons and œcumenical councils, and especially by the synod of Trent.* It would be hard enough to require a full assent to all these things, even from those who were best acquainted with them. Nor indeed do I believe, that any one person in the world, not even they who advised pope *Pius* to give authority to this article, nor his holiness himself, did ever *without doubting* receive all the things here required to be received. And yet *without this faith*, you will presently be told, *no man can be saved.*

But even the believing all this is not enough. You are not a true believer in the church of *Rome*, if you do not *condemn*, and *anathematize* all that is under that character condemned and anathematized by the church. You must concur with the church in condemning for heretics all those whom the church condemns; that is, all those, who do not believe exactly as the church believes, and who will not in every respect do as the church bids them. And what is the consequence of this; but that you must give your consent to the burning, or otherwise cruelly tormenting and destroying, all those, whose consciences will not suffer them to profess what they cannot see reason to believe? Let a man give ever such clear proofs of the integrity of his heart, by a holy course of life; and let him ever so solemnly declare, that there are some things required by the church of *Rome*, which he believes to be contrary to the mind of Christ, or at least is not convinced that they are agreeable
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to his mind : yet according to this article he is a heretic, and must be treated as a heretic.

In this and the preceding article you see the true spirit of popery : you see it is of the very essence of popery to domineer over the consciences of men, and to exercise all manner of severity and cruelty, for the support of that domination. By this twelfth article all those, who receive any thing contrary to what the church of *Rome* receives, are *anathematized as heretics*. By virtue of the preceding, which requires *an intire obedience* to the pope, as *vicar of Jesus Christ*, all the punishments which he requires to be inflicted on heretics, must by the true sons of the church be inflicted on them. From these two springs, and from the same doctrine, taught and inculcated by the church of *Rome*, before this creed of pope *Pius* was formed, have streamed forth the horrid wickedness, of subjects renouncing allegiance to such princes as would not obey the pope, and even of murdering them and all their adherents.

Out of the numerous particulars, which by this article the *Romanist* professes *without doubting to receive*, I shall make only one quotation ; from the great *Lateran* council, holden by pope *Innocent III.* in the year 1215. which for brevity's sake I shall quote only in *English*. From this alone protestants may sufficiently see, what the creed of a papist obliges him to ; and what they themselves must expect, if they fall into popish hands. 'Tis made a part of the * *Canon-Law* ; and is expressed as follows.

We

* Decret. Gregor. lib. V. tit. 7. cap. 13.

We excommunicate and anathematize all heresy, which lifts up itself against this holy, orthodox and catholic faith, which we have set forth; condemning all heretics, by what names soever they be reckoned. ---- Let those who are condemned be left to the secular powers in being, or their bailiffs, to be by them punished with due animadversion; they of the clergy being first degraded from their orders: so that the goods of those condemned, if they be of the laity, be confiscated; if of the clergy, applied to those churches from which they received stipends. As for those, who shall be found only marked with the suspicion of heresy: if they do not, according to the consideration of the suspicion, and the quality of person, prove their own innocence by a suitable purgation; let them be smitten with the sword of anathema, and, till they give a fitting satisfaction, be avoided by all: so that if they remain a whole year under excommunication, they be from that time condemned as heretics. But let all secular powers, whatever offices they exercise, be admonished and induced, and if need be let them by the censures of the church be compelled, as ever they would wish to be accounted faithful, for the defence of the faith publicly to take an oath, that they will bonâ fide, according to their power, endeavour to exterminate heretics, marked out by the church, from all the lands subject to their jurisdiction; so that from the time when any one shall be advanced into power, whether perpetual or temporal, he shall be obliged to confirm this matter with an oath. But if the temporal Lord, being thereunto by the church required and admonished, shall neglect to purge his territory

territory from this heretical defilement ; let him, by the metropolitan and the rest of the bishops of the province, be tied up in the bond of excommunication : and if he disdain to make satisfaction, let this within the year be signified to the pope, that from that time he may denounce his vassals to be absolved from fidelity to him, and expose his country to be occupied by catholics ; that they, having exterminated the heretics, may without any contradiction possess it, and keep it in the purity of the faith ; with a salvo to the right of the principal possessor, provided that he yield no obstacle in this affair, nor set up any impediment : the same law however to be observed with regard to such as have no principal lords. And as for those catholics, who, taking the badge of the cross, shall set themselves to the rooting out of heretics : they shall be favoured with the same indulgence, and fortified with the same holy privilege, which are granted to those who go to the aid of the holy land.

There is a variety of things in this decree, which very well deserve our notice. First, that all those in general are *condemned as heretics*, who venture to oppose what the pope and his council pronounce to be *the holy, orthodox, and catholic faith*. Then, that the poor *condemned heretics* are *delivered over to the secular powers, to be by them punished with due animadversion* ; the first act of which *due animadversion* is ordered to be a deprivation of all worldly substance. All princes are obliged to take a solemn oath, that they will *exterminate heretics out of their dominions*. And if they do not perform what the clergy think to be their duty herein ; they are to be excommunicated,

municated, their subjects discharged from allegiance to them, their country exposed to be possess'd by catholics, and the heretics for ever driven out. Moreover, there are encouragements, suited to superstitious minds, both in princes and people, to engage their whole power and influence for the destruction of those, whom the priests are resolved to destroy. It is proper likewise to take notice of the intolerable slavery, to which the people are by this decree exposed, before they are delivered over to destruction; by being made subject to *anathema*, when *only marked with the suspicion of heresy*, if they do not (what in many cases it will be impossible to do) *prove their own innocency* by what the priest shall account *a suitable purgation*: and of the dreadful misery of being *avoided by all, till they shall give what the priest shall be pleased to acknowledge a fitting satisfaction*. Thus the people are left intirely at the mercy of the priests: who can, by virtue of such a decree as this, *mark them with the suspicion of heresy*, at their own will and pleasure, whenever they venture in any respect to disoblige them; and then impose on them whatever methods of *purgation* they please, whether practicable or impracticable, *for proving their own innocency*; can demand whatever *satisfaction* they shall in their great wisdom and tenderness judge proper; and for want of receiving such *satisfaction*, can direct and oblige the magistrate to deprive them of substance, and liberty, and life itself.

But without commenting any farther on this decree, it is sufficient to observe: that in pursu-
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ance of such orders, and such encouragements to those who would put them in execution, there have been many cruel massacres in the christian world, whereby millions of human lives have been sacrificed to *Romish* tyranny; many holy wars, falsely so called, undertaken for the extirpation of heretics; and, besides innumerable other persecutions, a standing inquisition, big with slaughter and cruelty, as well as fraud and treachery, to the reproach of the christian name, and the destruction of thousands, who infinitely better deserved that name than their merciless inquisitors. And it is remarkable: that a little before the sitting of that council, from which this decree proceeded, the same pope *Innocent*, who presided in it, published a * croi-
sade against the poor *Albigenses*; exciting catholic princes to a holy war against them; which war, after many bloody battles, ended at length in the ruin of the country: and that it was under the direction of the same pope, that the † inquisition began. I shall not attempt to describe the cruelties of this barbarous institution; the massacres in *France* and *Ireland*; the ‡ slaughter of 40 millions of poor *Americans*, on pretence of converting them to the christian faith; or the invasions of our own country, particularly that by the *Spanish Armada* in 1588. Let it only be remembered; that all these cruelties proceeded from that ruling principle of the church of *Rome*, the resolution of making all mankind submit to
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* See *Perrin's* hist. of the old *Albigenses*: lib. III and IV.

† *Limborch. hist. Inquisit.* lib. I. cap. 10.

‡ Bp of *Chiapas's* account of the voyages and cruelties of the *Spaniards* in *America*. Lond. 1699. 8vo.

her arbitrary decisions. From the corrupt doctrines and cruel practices of that church may the good Lord deliver us. And may we by his grace be more and more confirmed in our adherence to his sacred word; more careful to acquaint ourselves with it, and conform our lives to it; and more clear-sighted to distinguish between *his doctrines* and *the commandments of men*.



C O N C L U S I O N.

ON E would have thought, that enough in all conscience had been said in the foregoing articles, to secure a *Romanist* in the profession of his faith, if he were at all to be secured. But what was briefly mentioned in the beginning of this essay, deserves to be more particularly observed in the conclusion. Lest the people and the inferior clergy should fail of taking sufficient care of themselves; the superior clergy, not excepting the heads of monasteries and convents, and the regulars of every order, and even those who have the care of the soldiery, under whatsoever name or title, are obliged to take a solemn oath in the following words:

This true catholic faith, without which no one can be saved, which at this present time I do of my own accord profess

profess and sincerely hold; I the same N. N. do promise, vow, and swear, God assisting me, most constantly to retain and confess, entire and unviolated, to the last breath of my life: and so far as in me lies, I will likewise take care, that it shall be held, taught, and preached by my subjects, or those, the care of whom belongs to me in the discharge of my office.

Here it is first to be observed ; that the authority of pope Pius declares concerning the whole preceding creed, *that without this faith no one can be saved*: so that, according to him; whether the common people * swear to this creed or not, yet they are all damned if they do not adhere to it. And, to make it the more effectual, at the end of the Bull in which this creed is contained, his holiness adds: *whosoever shall presume to infringe our will and command herein, or rashly oppose it ; let him know, that he shall incur the indignation of almighty God, and of St. Peter and Paul, his apostles.*

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* N B. At the head of the book, upon which I have been remarking, next after St. *Athanasius's* damnatory clause, the whole creed of the *Roman* church (including the *Nicene*, and the 12 additional articles of pope *Pius*) is prefixed; and this oath along with the rest, excepting only the latter part, which is peculiar to the superior clergy: and at the head of all are placed these words; *a profession of catholic faith*. Whence one would conclude, that the author of the catechism which follows looked upon the oath itself as part of the profession to be made by every catholic without exception.

In the next place I observe; that the dignified clergyman, who takes this oath, does by the tenor of it vow and swear, that he takes it *sub sponte, of his own accord*; when at the same time he knows he must do it, or else he cannot hold his dignity and power.

But, which is of much greater importance; I observe the dreadful consequence of the people's getting into the hands and power of the *Romish* clergy; since they are by such solemn obligations bound to maintain and promote articles, with which their worldly interest is so closely conjoin'd. This conjunction of oath and interest, in articles so destructive of the conscience, the peace, and the safety of the people, is much to be dreaded; when merely the oath itself, without the conjunction of interest, would bring little or no terror along with it. For a wicked clergyman may, under the pretence of an oath and vow, go on to do those things which are most destructive to the people, even in spite of some relentings in his heart, when he calls to mind that he has obliged himself thereto. Many such contradictions, it is to be feared, have concurred in the hearts of wicked men: and the real dictates of judgment and conscience have been over-ruled, by the pretence of the obligation of an oath or vow; which ought never to have been taken, but being once taken, is made a matter of religion, in spite of all remonstrances that religion itself can make.

Let *British* protestants think of these things: let them be thankful to God for that *liberty*, with which in his kind and gracious providence

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he has made them free; and resolve, through his grace, that they will *stand fast in it*, and not suffer themselves to be *entangled again with the yoke of bondage*. Let any man, who has ever read the new testament, judge what likeness there is, between the doctrine of pope *Pius's* creed, and that which was taught by *our blessed Lord* and his apostles. Nay let any man of sober thought, whether he has read the scriptures or not, judge whether it is possible, that such a religion should ever come from God, as that which the church of *Rome* tells you is *necessary to salvation*.

The doctrine of Christ and his apostles teaches us the highest veneration of *the one living and true God*, the wise and righteous and gracious governor of the world, and the most ardent affection to him as our best friend and benefactor: and directs and encourages us to seek of him, with a full assurance of faith, every needful blessing, in the name of Jesus Christ, the only mediátor between God and men. It requires of us righteousness and equity in our whole conduct towards those with whom we have to do; and very particularly recommends a mutual forbearance and affectionate tenderness among christian brethren, with regard to the misapprehensions and mistakes into which they may fall. And, as any religion must do which comes from God, it lays a very great stress upon a sober, temperate course of life; excluding from the kingdom of heaven those who allow themselves in the contrary course.

But in the preceding papers we have seen, that the religion of the church of *Rome* opposes
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that of our Lord Jesus Christ in all these respects, tho' it pretends in every one of them to adhere to it. The papists profess indeed to acknowledge one only living and true God : yet at the same time 'tis notorious, that they pay more real worship and adoration to angels and saints, and even to images, than to him. And to keep up this practice, such thoughts are suggested to the people's minds concerning the divine being, as are altogether unworthy of him, and inconsistent with the honour of the one and only mediator, in whose name we are directed to address him. Nay the multiplicity of the prayers themselves, which are addressed to saints and angels, begging for their intercession, tends to make the people think concerning the kindest and most benevolent being in the world, that he is almost inexorable, and that nothing but continual importunity will prevail with him for any favour : whereas the mediation of Christ, as stated in the new testament, teaches no such thing ; but encourages us, sinners as we are, to go directly to God in *his* name, *in whom* he has declared himself to be *well pleased*. But this one mediator is by the church of *Rome* overlooked, in a croud of others of her own making.

Then, instead of a strict regard to righteousness, and sobriety ; the doctrines of indulgences and purgatory, and so likewise that of absolution, upon confession and satisfaction at the will and pleasure of the priest, encourage all manner of vice and wickedness : since, according to these doctrines, a man may buy off any punishment,
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if he survives the wicked actions he resolves upon ; or, at the worst, can have them bought off when he is dead, if he has but money enough to leave behind him.

As to forbearance and brotherly kindness ; the church of *Rome* is a sworn enemy to these christian virtues. She will not bear the least deviation from her own traditions, decrees and canons. She makes them all *necessary to salvation*, both in this life, and that which is to come : presumptuously denouncing eternal damnation to those who do not punctually observe and obey them ; and cruelly destroying such of them as she can get into her own power.

What good pretensions the church of *Rome* has to be *the church of Christ*, she shews by setting up another head over the church besides Christ, inconsistently with his legislative authority, and contrary to his own exprets direction.

How little value she has for the scripture, she shews by setting up her own traditions upon an equal foot with it. And by the same means, and by claiming the sole authority of interpreting scripture, she prevents, as much as in her lies, its being of any use to the people, even when they can get a sight of their bibles, which for the most part is forbidden. She will not suffer them to exercise their reason in judging of that revelation, which she tells them God has given for their direction. No : if you will be a true member of this church, you must give up your reason, and even the testimony of your senses too ; as appears notoriously in the affair of transubstantiation. And yet it is evident, that our
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bleſſed Lord himſelf frequently appealed to the judgment and conſcience of his hearers, concerning the goodneſs and divine original of his doctrine; and always to their ſenſes, as often as he wrought any miracles.

How deſtructive to all the views of true religion is the ſtreſs which popery lays upon external ſervices, to the neglect of what is inward and pertaining to the conſcience; and how fatally this tends to harden men in their ſins, and to make them reſolve againſt the irkſome work of ſubduing ill habits, and labouring after thoſe which are truly good; is too viſible to need a demonſtration.

How abſolutely this corrupt church is reſolved upon maintaining a dominion over mens conſciences, and what cruel meaſures ſhe takes for that purpoſe, has been ſufficiently ſhewn. How contrary this domineering and cruel ſpirit is to the humble and peaceful ſpirit of chriſtianity, needs no proof, to thoſe who have any acquaintance with the books of the new teſtament. And how inconfiſtent it is with the peace of civil government, and even with the ſafety of thoſe, whether governors or people, who reſuſe to put themſelves intirely into the prieſts power; is not only evident in the nature of the thing, but notorious from hiſtory, in all thoſe caſes where the prieſts have thought it worth their while to try their ſtrength.

May we be defended from the corruptions with which this church is over-run, and from falling into the hands of her agents, *whoſe tender mercies are cruelties*. May we wiſely improve the great benefit

benefit of having the scripture in our own hands; by diligently attending to the mind of God therein made known, and obeying it in the tenor of our actions. May God in his mercy open the eyes of the deluded; and turn the hearts of those who lead them astray. And may there be no other contention among those who profess christianity, than who shall best answer the design of it, in the pious and peaceable and beneficent course of their lives. *Amen.*

F I N I S.





~~ERRATA.~~

~~PAGE 23. lin. 27. *dele it was* not long e'er.
pag. 41. lin. 7. r. *contradistinction*.
pag. 60. lin. *and* *ten*. for *cap.* 6. r. *cap.* 2.
pag. 94. lin. 18. after *help*, r. *and to my counsel*.
pag. 107. lin. 14. r. *Rev.* xix. 10.
pag. 158. lin. 14. r. 20th.~~





A P P E N D I X.

IT has been shewn in the foregoing essay, that the doctrine of indulgences has a manifest tendency to the ruin of mens souls. It has this pernicious tendency, even in case the indulgences be understood to relate only to sins past. For if a man who is viciously inclined can persuade himself, that pardons may be purchased for money, or obtained by any of those trifling measures which the indulgences prescribe; he will securely go on, paying for pardon after pardon, and complying with every method which shall be substituted in the room of real amendment; but will never endure the thought of that change of heart and mind, without which the Most High himself bestows no pardon. And a *Romanist* is the more in danger of going on thus to his life's end, because he knows, that according to the doctrine of his church, the priest is * obliged to give absolution to any man in the article of death, who professes penitence: nay further, that after he is dead, he may be prayed out of purgatory, if he leave behind him sufficient to satisfy the priest for his pains. If therefore it were ever so certain, that the indulgences mentioned in the † foregoing essay, from *Thomas Aquinas*, from

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* Concil. Trident. Sess. XIV. de penit. cap. 7.

† Pag. 116, 117.

Antonine's Repertorium, and from the canon-law, relate only to sins past: if they were meant only of forty days past, or seven years past, or a third part of sins past; or if the plenary indulgences themselves were pardons only for all sins past: yet it is as certain, that they who can believe, that such pardons can be obtained by visiting of churches, or by any of the other trifling methods prescribed in the *Romish* indulgences, will never in earnest set about the work of reformation, or think of conforming their heart and life to the mind of God. *Romish* indulgences therefore have much the same pernicious tendency, if understood concerning *sins past*, as if they directly promised pardon for *sins to come*: and the granting them, in those circumstances in which the popes of *Rome* grant them, is in effect the same monstrous abomination, as *giving leave to commit sin*, and *granting pardon beforehand*. Nor can any reason be given, why they, who will set themselves in the place of God, and undertake to forgive sins past, as they do, may not as well pretend to forgive sins to come.

The *Romish* writers indeed deny, that by indulgences they mean *leave to commit sin*, or *pardon for sins to come*. And particularly the author of *the Grounds of catholic doctrine* * denies that he means any such thing. It would be somewhat impolitic, if he should directly own it. But whatever this author may mean; what if both the particulars denied by him should be proved by the infallible authority of popes themselves? To this purpose it was intended to have produced

in

in the foregoing essay a monumental inscription, containing a pardon for 26000 years and 26 days; and likewise an indulgence granted in the year 1351, to a king and queen of *France* and their successors, allowing them liberty to break their oaths and vows, when they could not *commodiously* keep them. But the copy of the inscription was mislaid: and the other testimony was not produced, because the author of the essay had not an opportunity of consulting the book in which it was first published, and did not choose to quote it at second hand.

A fresh and authentic copy of the inscription is supplied by the friendship of the reverend Dr. *George Legh*, rector of *Hallifax* in the county of *York*: to whom it was transmitted by *George Legh*, of *Higb-Legh* in the county of *Chester*, esquire: who took care to have the impression taken from the monument itself, and attested by the hand of the reverend Mr. *John Robinson*, now minister of *Macclesfield* in the same county: in whose parish the monument is still to be seen, on the east-wall of an oratory, formerly belonging to the earls *Rivers*, standing on one side of the parochial chapel of *Macclesfield*. There is a brief account of this monument in the last edition of *Cambden's Britannia*, vol. I. pag. 678, 679. But it is very imperfect: and speaks in such a manner of 2 of the inscriptions belonging to it, as to render it very doubtful whether they belong to the same monument or not; whereas the plates containing those inscriptions, and several others hereafter described, tho' standing in different parts of the monument, are all with great exactness jointed together upon one stone, in the compass of 23 inches in height, and 22 in breadth.

At the bottom of the monument, on a brass or copper plate, are the following words; in 3 lines,

U 2

about

about 21 inches long; the letters, almost an inch in height, being cut out in old church-characters, not very easy to be imitated now, especially in the abbreviations:

Orate p̄ aīab; Rogen leg̃h et
Elizabeth vx̃is sue qui quidā
Rogenus obyt n̄ die Nouemb̃is
A dñi m̄ 6^e m̄ Elizabeth vero
obyt 6^e die Octob̃is A dñi m̄ cccc
lxxxix quoz aīab; p̄cietur de?

In *English* thus :

- Pray for the souls of Roger Legh and Elizabeth his wife : which Roger indeed died the 4th day of November, in the year of our Lord 1506 ; but Elizabeth died the 5th day of October, in the year of our Lord 1489 : to whose souls may God be propitious.

On another plate, just above this inscription, and close joining to the right side of it, is the figure of a woman, kneeling, with her hands held up together before her breast, and six children (probably her daughters) standing behind her. On another, near her mouth, is a label, with these words, in the same character as before :

a dampnatioe p̄petua lib̃a nos dñe

from perpetual damnation deliver us o lord.

It

It is * probable, by the large vacant space over the other end of the former inscription, that there was originally a plate, representing the gentleman and his sons, facing the lady and her daughters: because the inscription itself, in a very common form, calls upon every spectator to pray for his and her soul.

But this was all in *Latin*. And it was probable, that the greatest number of spectators would be such as understood only the *English* tongue. To engage therefore both learned and unlearned to pray for the souls of *Roger* and *Elizabeth Legh*, the most obvious part of the monument was contrived to be an *English* inscription; raised a considerable height above the *Latin* one; standing between the space where the lady kneels, and that where the figure of the gentleman probably was; reaching from their elbows up a little above their heads; and consequently so placed, that both their faces in kneeling must look towards it.

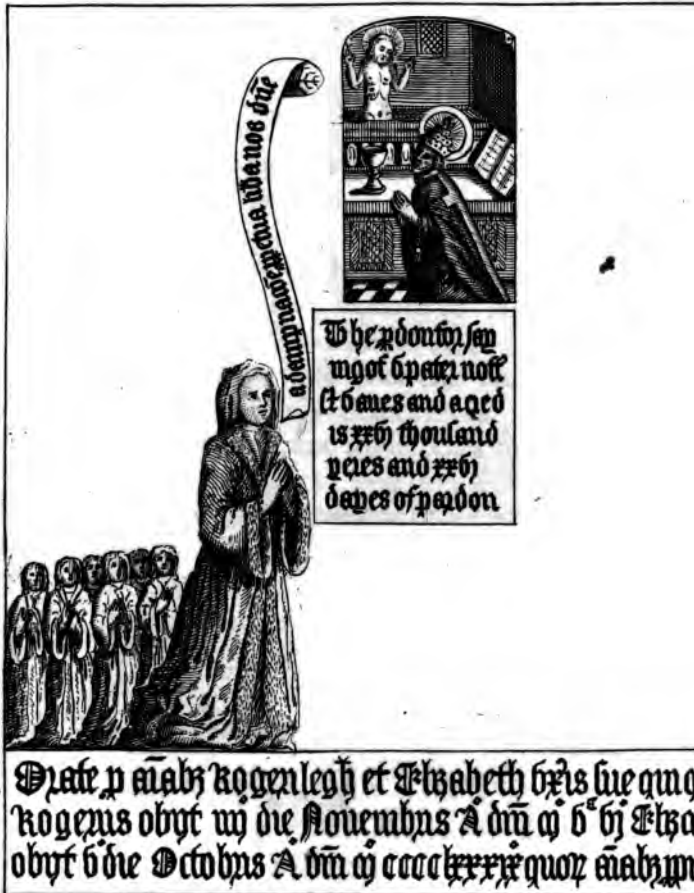
The words of this inscription, in the same character as before, are as follows; in six lines, so contrived as to make up the form of an oblong square:

The

* This conjecture is confirmed by the old inhabitants of *Maclesfield*: who, as the author of this essay is assured by very credible accounts, affirm they have heard that this space had formerly the figure of *Roger Legh* in it; but that it was broken off, together with other things belonging to the monument, during the civil wars, when the oratory was defaced. For further satisfaction herein, the plaster of the wall where the monument is fixed was knock'd off, in *December* or *January* 1735: and the stone appeared to be cut and hollowed in, as far as the end of the *Latin* inscription, in the same form as the plate for the lady and her children. There was likewise a place cut in the stone for a label, answering to that on the other side: and holes in the stone, with lead in them, for fastening the plates.

The p̄don for say
 ing of 6 pater noster
 et 6 aues and a cryed
 is xxij thousand
 yerres and xxij
 dayes of pardon

Directly over this inscription, on a plate something narrower, but taller, and a little arched at the top, is the figure of a pope, with a triple crown on his head, and a glory round it; kneeling beside a long table, and looking upwards, with his hands together before his breast. On the table is placed, behind him an open book, and before him either an hour-glass or a chalice, 'tis doubtful which. The place seems designed to represent a chapel. Under him is a pavement of chequered marble, or other stone, black and white. And above him is a representation of our Saviour, looking down upon him, with a large glory round his head, wounds through both his hands, which are held up as high as his shoulders, and a great wound in his right side, with several drops of blood coming from it. This figure



Copy of a Monument, in an Oratory at Macclesfield in Ch
inches high, and **xxii** broad; first taken, in that size, f
Original, in the Year **MDCCXXV**, and now reduced to a,

ה'תשנ"ב
ליום ה' כ"ט
בחדר ה' תשנ"ב
ביום ה' כ"ט
בחדר ה' תשנ"ב

[illegible]

100-443887-1000

... ..

[illegible]

figure is drawn no lower than the hips; being divided from the rest of the picture by balisters, behind which it seems designed to be placed.

Whether all this imagery was intended to signify, that the then reigning pope had prayed to our Lord Jesus Christ, to impower him to grant the pardon mentioned in the inscription, and that, according to the frequent fictions of those times, our Lord had appeared to him, to assure him of his consent; or whatever else was the real design; cannot now be certainly determined. But it is plain from the monument itself, that such a pardon was granted by a pope: and that this was well known when the monument was set up; otherwise severe must have been the punishment of those who erected it, for an imposition upon the church, and a slander against his holiness. The inscription itself, thus pompously attended, is, I say, a sufficient indication; that the pope then reigning did grant an indulgence, containing a *pardon for sins to come*, sins not yet committed; the penalty whereof is here expressly remitted for 26000 years to come. So that if the author of *the Grounds* does, as he * affirms, mean no more by indulgences, than ‘a releasing by the
 ‘ power of the keys committed to the church
 ‘ the debt of temporal punishment, which may
 ‘ remain due upon the account of our sins, after
 ‘ the sins themselves, as to the guilt and eternal
 ‘ punishment, have been already remitted by re-
 ‘ pentance and confession:’ yet in the case before us, even according to his own explication, the
 indulgence

indulgence must extend to *sins to come*: and that in a very flagrant manner; so as to lead the superstitious devotees to hope, that upon saying the appointed *pater nosters* and *ave Maries* and creed, they should have a pardon reaching beyond the duration of this world.

I chose the rather to take notice of this monument, because it gives a more sure account of what is meant by popish indulgences, than is likely to be gathered from the writings of authors, whose business it is to make them appear as plausible as they can.

The other testimony relates more immediately to the question, whether indulgences include *a leave to commit sin*: though as it extends to all the successions of the kings and queens of *France*, it must likewise, if it signifies any thing at all, include in effect *a pardon beforehand*, for all the sins they should ever commit, in breaking their solemn oaths and vows. It is an indulgence, granted by *Clement VI.* in the year 1351, to the king and queen of *France*, and their successors. I shall produce it in the pope's own words: and then leave the world to judge, what he himself, and the persons to whom he granted it, could be supposed to understand by it. The pope's words, transcribed from *D'achery's Spicilegium*, are at the bottom of the page. The *English* is to the following purpose: but an exact translation is not pretended to.

Clement,

* Clement, *bishop, servant of the servants of God: to our most dear children in Christ, John and Joan, the illustrious king and queen of France; greeting and apostolical benediction. Your desires we readily agree to: those especially, by which ye may obtain from a propitious God, as ye piously request, peace and health of soul. Hence it is that we, inclined to your supplications, do by apostolical authority, by the tenor of these presents, for ever indulge to you and your successors, who for the time being shall be kings and queens of France, and to every of you and them; that such confessor, religious or secular, as any of you and them shall think fit to choose, may commute, for you and them, such vows as perhaps you may have made already, or which by you and your successors may be hereafter made, (the ultramarine vow, and*
X *that*

* Clemens, episcopus, servus servorum Dei, carissimis in Christo filiis, Joanni regi, & Joannæ reginæ Franciæ illustribus: salutem & apostolicam benedictionem. Votis vestris libenter annuimus: iis præcipuè, per quæ, sicut piè desideratis, pacem & salutem animæ, Deo propitio, consequi valeatis. Hinc est, quòd nos, vestris supplicationibus inclinati, vobis & successoribus vestris, regibus & reginis Franciæ, qui pro tempore fuerint, ac vestrum & eorum cuilibet, auctoritate apostolicâ, tenore præsentium, in perpetuum indulgemus: ut confessor religiosus vel sæcularis, quem vestrum & eorum quilibet duxerit eligendum, vota per vos forsitan jam emissâ, ac per vos & successores vestros in posterum emittenda, ultramarino, ac beatorum Petri & Pauli apostolorum, ac castitatis & continentiæ votis dumtaxat exceptis; necnon juramenta per vos & eos præstanda in posterum, quæ vos & illi servare commode non possitis, vobis & eis commutare valeat in alia opera pietatis, prout secundum Deum & animarum vestrarum & eorum saluti viderit expedire. Nulli ergo omnino hominum liceat hanc paginam nostræ concessionis infringere, vel ei ausu temerario contraire. Siquis autem hoc attentare præsumserit, indignationem omnipotentis Dei, & beatorum Petri & Pauli apostolorum ejus, se noverit incursum. Datum Avenioni, xiii calend. Maii, anno nono. *Dacher. Spicileg. edit. 1723. tom. III. pag. 724.*

that of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and that of chastity and continency, only excepted) and also such oaths, by you taken, or by you and them hereafter to be taken, as you and they cannot commodiously keep, into other works of piety, according as he shall see expedient for the health of your and their souls, and agreeable to God. Be it therefore utterly unlawful for any man whatever to infringe this our grant; or by a rash adventure to proceed in opposition to it. But if any shall presume to attempt this; let him know, that he shall incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul. Given at Avignon, the 19th of April, in our ninth year.

I will not offer to affirm, that the kings and queens of *France* have, since the grant of this indulgence, kept their solemn oaths and vows a whit worse than they would have done, if no such indulgence had ever been granted. Yet if they had any faith in the pope's power, the indulgence must needs have been a strong temptation to break through their oaths and vows, upon all those occasions, where the strict observation of them became any way *incommodious* to their interests, or unsuitable to their inclinations. However let the world judge: whether the undertaking to discharge men from vows and oaths, by which they have solemnly bound themselves; particularly whether the giving this liberty to princes, upon whose public obligations their own subjects and those of other nations think they have a right to depend, and the commuting or changing those obligations for others of a different kind, is not *granting a leave to commit sin*. If it
is

is not: then the breaking of oaths and vows, merely for our own interest or pleasure, and without any regard to the just claims of our fellow-creatures, is no sin.

Now let the author of *the Grounds* choose; whether he will deny the * facts related; or set up his own authority against that of the popes, who granted the indulgences referred to; or whether he will vindicate them in those blasphemous grants, and prove they were guilty of no crime, and overtaken with no error.

* Other instances of the like kind might be produced. Among which is a remarkable Rubric in the *Hortulus animæ*, pagg. 340, 341, under the head of *Suffragia virginum*, in the following words. *Alexander Papa sextus concessit decem millia annorum indulgentiarum pro mortalibus, et viginti pro venialibus, dicenti banc orationem trinā vice coram imagine S. Annæ ac B. Virginis, et Filii ejus: quas et proprio ore promulgavit et publicavit; anno videlicet M. CCCC. XCIII.* That is to say: Pope Alexander VI. granted ten thousand years of indulgences for mortal sins, and twenty for venial sins, to him who should say this prayer before the image of S. Anne, and of the blessed Virgin, and of her Son: which indulgences he also promulged and published with his own mouth, in the year 1494. Then the prayer is recited. To the same purpose is a passage, in fol. 213. of the *Horas Portuguezas, e Manual de Oraçoens*, &c. printed with the King's royal license, at Lisbon, 1675. Where we are told: that whoever shall devoutly say a prayer, there recited, of the merits of the passion of Jesus Christ our Lord, composed by the glorious father Saint Augustine, taken from the original, which is in the chapel of St. John of Lateran in Rome, shall, provided he obtains in the same year the Bull de sancta Cruce, gain, the day in which he recites that prayer, eighty thousand years of indulgence and remission of mortal sins, granted and confirmed by many popes. And not altogether foreign to the subject is fol. 212. of the same book: where we are assured: that pope Clement VIII. granted the indulgence of delivering a soul out of purgatory, for every time that a certain prayer, there recited, should be said in honour of the holy Sudarium; "provided only, that he be in the same year" "furnish'd with the Bull just now mentioned."---But things of this kind are so notorious, that there is no need of multiplying proofs.



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